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SOCIAL MEDIA IN A HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASS:

A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY

By

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Affiliated Faculty of

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies at the University of New England

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SOCIAL MEDIA IN A HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASS:
A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY

ABSTRACT

This qualitative collective case study sought to describe the perceptions and experiences of an 11th-grade English teacher and her students when incorporating social media into the classroom. The teacher introduced social media into four classrooms, wherein the students answered questions and interacted with each other on a discussion board. The teacher's fifth classroom remained a traditionally taught class, wherein the teacher lectured about class material. After six weeks of instruction, the researcher interviewed the teacher and provided anonymous surveys to the students to determine their perceptions and experiences when incorporating social media into the classroom. The researcher analyzed and coded the data using qualitative coding software. The analyzed data produced five overarching themes: (1) Social Media as an Educational Tool, (2) Gaining Real-World Experience through Technology, (3) Learning through Discourse and Diverse Opinions, (4) Communication and Connection, and (5) Creating Interest. The researcher's interpretation of the themes led to three findings: (1) Creating Student Engagement and Community, (2) Creating Conversation and Online Learning, and (3) Creating a Pathway to Higher Education/Job Demands. The study's conclusions suggested that researchers study other high school classrooms to bolster the findings and to add to the body of literature. This study and future studies may assist educators decide if incorporating social media in their high school classrooms would be appropriate for their schools and school districts.

University of New England

Doctor of Education
Educational Leadership

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As more individuals become connected to the Internet by laptops, notebooks, tablets, and smartphones, they often use social media applications in their personal lives. As of 2015, research suggested that 65% of American adults used social media as compared to a decade before, when only 7% were active on various social media sites (Perrin, 2015). Bold and innovative high school teachers have taken advantage of students' familiarity with social media tools by integrating them into their instruction (Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015). The examination of the efficacy of social media use in the high school classroom as an enhancement to teaching and learning is crucial.

Researching social media use at the high school level is important for several reasons. First, educators are currently spending valuable instructional time using social media in the classroom (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015; Davis, Deil-Amen, Rios-Aguilar, & Canché, 2015; Evans, 2014; Fang, Mishna, Zhang, Van Wert, & Bogo, 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Gupta, Singh, & Marwaha, 2013; Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Mandviwalla, Schuff, Chacko, & Miller, 2013; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Munoz, Pellegrini-Lafont, & Cramer, 2014; Poellhuber, Roy, & Anderson, 2011; Zgheib, 2014). If there are no advantages, educators should discontinue the integration of social media into instruction. Second, because the use of social media provides for interaction between and among the participants, it is likely that this opportunity for interactive discourse will enhance classroom instruction. With the use of social media in the classroom, students have the chance to ask questions as needed, rather than at a specified time. Additionally, evidence shows that when the teacher added social media to the classroom, the

students had more opportunity to learn with the hands-on approach of using social media instead of during the traditional lecturing of the teacher (Casey & Wells, 2015). Third, there may be additional, unexpected benefits to using social media in the classroom that are yet to be determined.

Statement of the Problem

Many researchers have attempted to determine the effects of social media use at both two-year (Davis et al., 2015) and four-year colleges (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Evans, 2014; Fang et al., 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Mandviwalla et al., 2013; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Munoz et al., 2014; Zgheib, 2014). Moreover, the effects of social media use in distance learning were studied (Gupta et al., 2013; Munoz et al., 2014; Poellhuber et al., 2011). However, there are a limited number of studies examining the use of social media in the high school classroom (Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015). Those high school studies focused on the effects of its use on subsequent college performance, rather than on the benefits of its use in the high school classroom. Additionally, no studies were found conducted to date to determine the efficacy of the use of social media in specific content areas of the high school curriculum.

The site selected by the researcher is a high school in a parish in northwest Louisiana. The grade levels are ninth through twelfth. Approximately 2,200 students attend this school, with a student/teacher ratio of 21:1 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016). This school provides general, enriched, and honors/advanced placement classes. It offers magnet classes and dual enrollment classes. The school is renowned within its parish for providing opportunities for students to succeed, both inside and outside of the classroom. The teachers,

students, and administrators of the school will benefit from research that examines the use of social media use in the classroom, and whether it provides advantages to students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of the use of social media on high school students enrolled in five 11th-grade enriched English classes. More specifically, the research focused on the students of one English class taught traditionally, and four English classes taught with the integration of social media. Data was collected from both the teacher and her students to determine how they experienced the addition of social media to the classroom. The study also explored how the use of social media affected the students' academic achievement and student engagement. These results will assist in curriculum development for courses of study offered at the high school level in general, but more specifically in curriculum development for the high school English classroom.

Evidence shows that collaborative learning enhances both academic performance and student engagement (Al-Rahmi, Othman, & Yusuf, 2015). Further evidence supports the assertion that a collaborative learning environment can improve student learning. In the study of a blended course—face-to-face instruction and online video watching—Jong (2016) discovered that students understood the difficult concepts easier than those in the traditional class did. If students in the high school English class obtain a higher degree of academic achievement and student engagement due to collaborative learning, it would benefit both students and educators to incorporate social media in the classroom.

Research Questions

The overarching research question presented was: *How does social media use in education affect an 11th-grade enriched English class?* More specifically, the research explored the following questions:

- How do students experience the use of social media in a high school English class?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' academic achievement, as experienced by the students?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' engagement, as experienced by the students?
- How does an 11th grade English teacher experience the use of social media in her class?

Conceptual Framework

As shown previously, teachers are using social media in the on ground classroom, not only in distance learning classes. Because of this integration, questions have arisen as to whether social media is helpful or harmful in the classroom. Studies have shown that there are positive links among collaborative learning, student engagement, and academic performance (Al-Rahmi et al., 2015). However, when discussing social media use in education, more research should be conducted in the high school classroom. As mentioned previously, there is limited research in the high school arena (Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015). Most of this research focused on how social media would affect the students' college careers. Moreover, while the high school student was the focus of some research, no research was found that focused on high school English students and how they experienced the use of social media in the classroom. While it was important to show the statistical links between students' performance and social media use,

research was performed to document how the student experiences the addition of this familiar tool in the classroom.

This study drew upon on two learning theories: Social Constructivism (Churcher, Downs, & Tewksbury, 2014; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Powell & Kalina, 2009) and Connectivism (Siemens, 2005; Evans, 2014; Thota, 2015). Both theories suggest that learning has a social component and that individuals benefit from interaction and discourse among themselves. As educators are incorporating social media use into the classroom, this component requires more study. These two learning theories provided a foundation upon which the researcher conducted this study.

Social Constructivism asserts that individuals create meaning in the world around them by interacting with others in both formal and informal settings (Churcher et al., 2014). The idea of social learning was first postulated by Lev Vygotsky in 1978 (as cited by Churcher et al., 2014). He theorized that students' verbal sharing of ideas stimulates innovative ways of understanding difficult concepts, and new language with which to tag those difficult concepts (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). His research suggests that language enhances cognition, and cognition improves language. The implication of this theory is that without social interaction, learning itself is impeded, as is the language used to convey what one has learned. The use of social media in the classroom may provide fertile ground for growth in both knowledge and the language used to express it.

Connectivism is a theory posited by George Siemens (2005) that specifically addresses learning in the digital age. According to Siemens, there are principles of Connectivism. First, he suggested that the distribution of understanding occurs across individuals' interactive contributions (Thota, 2015). As individuals connect to each other via various social media sites,

they enter into discourse about the original topic posted. One person may share a story or a fact that will enhance the original poster's knowledge about the subject. As individuals build social networks with others online, they have access to a wealth of information otherwise not available.

The second component of Connectivism is that knowledge is acquired from networked communities, both learning communities and the individual's networks. The additional information gained is a result of the diversity of thoughts and discussions shared within these networks (Thota, 2015). According to the results of research conducted by Aksal, Gazi, and Bahçelerli (2013), college students using Facebook as a supplement to their coursework self-reported that using the site enhanced their learning. Siemens' (2006) study showed that individuals are comfortable in their network on the social media site with their cohorts. Students contribute diverse ideas and resources for others to read and assimilate into their knowledge base. At this point, other students will support or refute what has been said using their ideas and resources. This diversity of ideas expands an individual's knowledge base.

A third component is that individuals are no longer required to mentally store all the needed information because technology can assist with and enhance both storage and retrieval (Thota, 2015). Oral language and thought processing are fleeting modes of communication. However, when the words themselves remain permanently accessible, through written language stored via advanced technology, individuals can revisit the ideas multiple times, strengthening the connections for understanding each time they are retrieved. It is evolving technology that also provides new and often quickly changing ideas about a subject area that an individual may not be able to remember otherwise.

The fourth component of Connectivism is that individuals reflect and learn during discourse with the other students, as well as the sharing of created posts, blogs, and other

multimedia (Thota, 2015). In research conducted by Aksal et al. (2013), 30 of the 35 students in the course stated they were satisfied using Facebook as a method of learning. They found that the discussion between the students and negotiation of information not only made their learning a richer experience but also offered multiple perspectives to consider. The researchers noted that their findings supported the fourth component as collaborated discourse. Discussion on the social media site inspired the students to reflect upon shared information. This discussion assisted students in internalizing the knowledge learned.

Finally, the fifth component of Connectivism is that while a person may be focusing on learning for work-related reasons, the actual process can be informal (Thota, 2015). Siemens (2006) noted that the skills individuals develop are often through trial and error, not from listening to an individual lecturing about each step of a skill. He further stated that while individuals can learn foundations through formal learning, they would experiment with those foundations. The experimentation is considered informal learning, which is learning an individual does at his or her pace, in any situation (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). While students are logged in to a social media site and are in conversation with other students, they may search for relevant information online to support their ideas.

According to Greenhow and Lewin (2016), this type of informal learning can change the physical location of where learning takes place. Students are not only learning in the classroom with information provided by the teacher but also through social media, which presents an opportunity for individuals to learn spontaneously and in a self-directed way. This type of informal learning can provide them with opportunities to engage in digital communities to which they otherwise might not have access. The individuals also have access to resources they might

not have had without social media. Because of this type of informal learning provided by social media, individuals can expand the boundaries of where they can learn.

These two theories, Social Constructivism and Connectivism, provided the foundation upon which the conceptual framework of this study rested. As using social media in education provides a new social component to the classroom, it is crucial to look to learning theories that incorporate both social learning and technology. Students can interact with other students and teachers on social media sites, providing different ideas and rationale for those ideas. For example, a blog post and subsequent responses and discussion related to the post can change the entire train of thought and direction that a student may take to write a paper or work on a project. Students can provide other resources that unavailable prior to the universal use of social media. Students who do not use social media in the classroom may have a less rich educational experience than those who use social media in conjunction with their education.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope

This study is influenced by assumptions the researcher has about the participants, the limitations that exist within the research, and the scope of the study. These are important to address as to make the reader aware of what challenges may exist within the study that can affect the outcome. One assumption of this study is that 11th-grade students know how to use Facebook, Twitter, and respond to blogs. Another assumption is that they know how to use a cell phone for texting. A third assumption would be that they understand Internet slang (e.g., IDK [I don't know], TTYL [talk to you later], LOL [laugh out loud], and JK [just kidding]). A final assumption is that the students will share their actual experiences when asked, instead of creating a response they think the researcher, or other students, would want to hear.

One limitation of this study is the small sample size. The researcher originally intended to host two to three focus groups of five to seven participants. However, due to students not returning the consent and assent forms, the researcher provided an anonymous survey for the students to complete and return. Because the results were studied qualitatively, they cannot be generalized to any particular group. According to Atieno (2009), limitations of qualitative research include the inability to generalize to a wider audience. Therefore, the researcher was unable to state that all 11th-grade enriched high school English students will have the same perceptions and experiences using social media in the classroom as did the subjects in this study. A third limitation is that the students will be self-reporting their experiences. Miller (2012) stated that individuals who self-report often have social desirability bias when surrounded by their peers and reporting their experiences. There is a possibility that the students may have exaggerated their experiences while in a group of their classmates. While these limitations exist, it is still important to share the students' voices to assess the possible benefits and detriments of social media use in the English classroom.

Significance

No documented research found has presented the perceptions and experiences of high school English students when incorporating social media in the classroom. It is important that educators know these results to design successful lesson plans. That is, these results may be an impetus for school leaders, administrators, and curriculum planners to include a component of social media use in the high school English classroom. They may also suggest certain limitations of the use of social media in the high school classroom. This study was the first to examine this question but may be the catalyst for further studies on the use of social media in the classroom. These results are important as they provide qualitative data on social media users' experiences to

support or reject the use of social media in the high school classroom. Additionally, it suggests a definitive area of study on which other researchers should focus. The act of using social media entails reading and writing outside of the standard application in an English class. Studying and reporting on the expansion of these boundaries provides high school English students with the opportunity to experience reading and writing activities they may not have experienced otherwise.

Definition of Terms

Web 2.0: Web 2.0 is a web collaborative web development that includes communication and the sharing of information. Individuals can discuss, share, add to, and take away from content in Web 2.0 tools (Harris & Rea, 2009).

Social media: Social media are online networks where individuals can interact, share ideas, and develop groups based on interests or other similarities (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015). Social media are built on the foundation of Web 2.0, both technologically and ideologically (Barczyk & Duncan, 2012).

Learning management system: A learning management system (LMS) is a software in which educators can provide content for their students. The platform is stored on school servers and accessed by students and instructors on computers, smartphones, and tablets (Rouse, 2005).

Academic performance: Academic performance can include grades and performance in class, including final GPA. Researchers have measured academic performance by end-of-the-semester grades (Gupta et al., 2013), final grades (Munoz et al., 2014), and overall semester GPAs (Junco et al., 2011).

Student engagement: Student engagement is defined as how much time and effort a student invests into educational activities that will assist in obtaining the individual's desired

outcomes. This time and effort may consist of more connectivity in the classroom, higher achievement, or learning skills outside of what the teacher requires in the class (Junco et al., 2011).

Formal learning: Formal learning is the knowledge that the individual acquires in a formal classroom setting (Cournoyer, 2012) wherein the teacher or instructor guides the learning of the students (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016).

Informal learning: Individuals control informal learning (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016) wherein they search for information they wish to learn or learn information unintentionally.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of social media use in the high school English classroom. More specifically, the researcher performed a qualitative collective case study to determine how the students and English teachers in specific enriched English classes experienced the addition of social media in the classroom in conjunction with traditional teaching methods. The researcher provided these students and their teacher voices to add to the growing body of literature.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this literature review was to determine what, if any, effect and influence the use of social media in education has on both students and educators. As prevalent as social media use is becoming in the everyday world (Perrin, 2015), it is natural that some technologically well-informed educators would integrate these tools into their classes. Because Facebook, Twitter, and other social media tools are easy to access and use, social media is not difficult to implement into the curriculum. However, it is important to study the effects of their use on both student and educator. If the research shows that social media use is detrimental to the students or the educator, their use should be discouraged. If the tools are found to have a positive effect, then this may lead to a standardized application of social media to maximize the benefits.

This integrative literature review presents a broad range of literature that pertains to the study of the use of social media tools in education, as well as their effect on academic performance and student engagement. The researcher discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using social media in education. The literature review consists of peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and books. The publication dates of all material are between 2004 and 2017. However, most the works' publication dates are after 2009. The information gleaned from the above sources are synthesized and critiqued. The researcher discusses evidence gathered from the literature review, as well as conclusions drawn from the analysis of the literature.

As the use of social media tools is emerging in education, the field is relatively new. Additionally, most research conducted focuses on social media use at the college and university

level. One noteworthy gap in the literature is research conducted at the high school level, more specifically in the 11th-grade English class. This review includes the use of social media in high school, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and distance learning. This review examines the blurring of boundaries between formal and informal learning, the pedagogy of a social media class, the advantages and disadvantages of social media use in education, and some ethical concerns that can arise with social media use. Most of the current literature surrounds the use of Facebook and Twitter. However, there are mentions of other social media tools, including a tool created by a college for use in their business program.

The researcher searched online for articles, books, and dissertations. The databases used were Academic Search Complete, ERIC, EBSCO's eBook Collection, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, PsychInfo, and SocIndex. The keywords used were *social media use* and *education*. Quotations were used to group *social media use* into one phrase. Additionally, the Boolean operator *and* was used to discover literature that would discuss both social media use and education. The researcher then used a snowball technique, wherein she found articles cited in the literature gathered from the original keyword search. Additionally, the researcher set a Google alert for *social media use in education* with the words social media use in quotations. She would review all alerts as they were delivered to her inbox and decide if they were relevant to use.

Overview

While educators have taken advantage of the integration of social media in their courses, social media as an educational tool is still a growing idea. Many educators will not use social media and continue lecturing traditionally. Other bolder educators take advantage of the innovative technology and incorporate it into their courses. Social media tools are more than just

Facebook and Twitter, which are two popular sites individuals use daily. Social media can include web tools such as wikis, blogs, Instagram, and other online platforms that connect individuals. Many educators and students only see social media as an avenue to connect family and friends or to discuss their current beliefs and thoughts. They are unable to imagine how education can benefit from the use of social media, whether it classroom, hybrid, or distance learning. According to a study performed by Merle and Freberg (2016), 10% of the students studied were unable to imagine how they could use social media in the classroom. However, evidence has shown that social media use in education can provide a wealth of knowledge that students might not have had otherwise. They can learn from the instructor, from various websites and videos online, and from other students' experiences. Evidence suggests that the use of social media can enhance academic performance as well as student engagement. As more researchers study this phenomenon, educators continue to take bold risks and incorporate a social media component to their courses (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015; Davis et al., 2015; Evans, 2014; Fang et al., 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Gupta et al., 2013; Junco et al., 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Mandviwalla et al., 2013; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Munoz et al., 2014; Poellhuber et al., 2011; Zgheib, 2014).

Learning Theories

Learning theories postulate how an individual learns. There are many types of learning theories, some of which theorists formed during the building of the current understanding of psychology. Others came about due to the growing use of technology in the world. Teachers often have beliefs in the way that students learn and will tailor classes with those theories in

mind (Bates, 2015). Two traditional learning theories in which teachers often believe are Behaviorism and Cognitivism.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism is a learning theory posited by B. F. Skinner. He theorized that learning derived from the behavior that resulted from a variable (Johnson, 2008). His experiments showed that stimuli caused a response. More specifically, a behavior would happen if there were a reinforcement or reward. For example, a rat learns that certain buttons provide food and certain buttons provide a shock. The rat learns which button to push and which button not to push. In the educational experience, the educator provides instruction. The students perform the action (e.g., performing quality research) and obtain a passing grade. However, Behaviorism focuses on punishments as well. Johnson (2008) further discusses reinforcement removal, which consists of “extinction, response cost, and time-out” (p. 109). In the classroom, extinction is when students do not turn in homework, thus not receiving a response from the teacher. Response cost is when grades are lowered if students do not turn in their homework. Finally, time-out is when teachers send sending students out of the classroom if they do not maintain proper behavior.

Cognitivism

As opposed to Behaviorism, Cognitivism postulates that mental processes occur when an individual acquires information. An example is when teachers provide lectures to their students. The students acquire, process, and assimilate the information with knowledge they already possess (Bates, 2015). Cognitivism was born from the frustration of psychologists who felt there was more to learning than the reward and punishment system (Yilmaz, 2011). While Behaviorism could explain some of how an individual learned, it did not explain how individuals

assimilated previously learned information with additional information. The psychologists also believed that some individuals did not respond to their environment in the same way as others. In Cognitivism, psychologists theorized that individuals were active participants in the learning process.

While educators accept Behaviorism and Cognitivism as viable ways to learn, these theories do not account for learning with social media. The addition of social media as a learning tool adds a further dimension that neither learning theory can fully explain. While it is reasonable that one could look to Cognitivism to explain how learning occurs when using social media, this theory cannot explain all aspects of social media use in education, such as collective and networked learning with other individuals. Researchers in the field have suggested that Social Constructivism or Connectivism may be more appropriate when discussing learning in conjunction with social media (Bates, 2015; Churcher et al., 2014; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Powell & Kalina, 2011; Thota, 2015; Siemens, 2005).

Social Constructivism

A learning theory that has become prevalent with the use of social media in education is Social Constructivism. In 1978, Lev Vygotsky (as cited in Churcher et al., 2014) postulated that individuals learned socially. As people engage in discourse and social interaction, they construct meaning to the world around them. Students gain knowledge in this construction. Vygotsky further theorized that there are two types of learning: interpsychological learning and intrapsychological learning. Interpsychological learning is the act of an individual gaining knowledge through discourse with others. Intrapsychological learning is when a person has internal dialogue, assimilating knowledge the person has already learned. More succinctly, knowledge is gained interpsychologically through discourse and interaction with others, which

then results in individuals internalizing the information and learning intrapsychologically (Churcher et al., 2014). Mondahl and Razmerita (2014) further note that individuals build new knowledge upon which they have already learned. Social interaction among individuals is important in the theory of Social Constructivism.

Powell and Kalina (2011) further describe how the process of learning occurs in the theory of Social Constructivism. Vygotsky described a zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the zone in which children learn when helped by others. According to Powell and Kalina (2011), researchers have confirmed that many children have an easier time learning when there are others involved in the process. Another aspect of Social Constructivism that the researchers discuss is scaffolding. Scaffolding is the idea that the social dimension of learning is more effective when others support the learner. This support reinforces knowledge—and often catches mistakes—when a child learns. Vygotsky's belief was that social interaction during learning assisted individuals in internalizing the knowledge. Even though the researchers referred to children learning, the theory of Social Constructivism would be appropriate in the study of any student learning with social media (Churcher et al., 2014; Powell & Kalina, 2011).

This theory is relevant to the use of social media in education. As students interact with each other and their instructors, they learn new knowledge. Students share their thoughts and feedback, and in turn, other students learn. In reading the posts of one individual, others may take that view, add it to their internal beliefs, and use that knowledge in a later situation. This situation is a form of learning. Social constructivism is, as stated by Bates (2015), a dynamic process. When a child learns something at age eight, he or she will likely have a deeper and richer understanding of this concept at the age of 38. A lifetime of experience and interaction with other people deepens that which the individual learned at age eight.

Connectivism

As social media and the Internet has become more prevalent in our world, another learning theory has emerged. Siemens (2005) researched various learning theories and attempted to apply them to how individuals learned with the addition of technology at the time. He noted that knowledge ten years prior was vastly different from what it was in 2005. Technology has expanded knowledge, as well as individual's minds. Because of this, he created a new theory specifically based on networks, chaos, and self-organization theories. Networks are connections between people, organizations, groups, or any other entities. Chaos is the connection of all things. The idea of chaos is that meaning does exist, and the individual must determine the patterns and meaning. Self-organization theories are those that postulate that people create information by forming connections and patterns between bits of information. Siemens (2005) suggests that learning is the way in which an individual processes knowledge through environments that are constantly shifting. He states that knowledge can exist outside of a person, such as in another person or a database. He further notes that not only does it matter that individuals obtain specialized information sets, but that the connections from which an individual learns are more important than what a person already knows. This theory suggests that people are constantly assimilating information and they base their decisions on a shifting knowledge foundation. The person should determine what information is relevant and what is not, as well as knowing that what is learned today can facilitate a drastic change in how those decisions made yesterday are perceived.

The importance of Connectivism as a Learning Theory, as noted by Evans (2014), is that learning is not about what an individual knows. Learning is about what an individual knows how to obtain. With technology being as prevalent as it is, if people want to learn something

about social media in education, they use known connections to discover information. For instance, they may have a friend who is a teacher that uses Twitter in the classroom. There are also journal articles and dissertations written on the subject. Both people (the teachers) and databases (the journal articles written and stored in the digital library) contain extensive information about the use of social media in education.

Both Social Constructivism and Connectivism are relevant learning theories that can explain how individuals learn when social media is introduced into the classroom. Individuals are learning by interacting with others, which is Social Constructivism. Students can write a status update about their dissertation topic, which can prompt other students to suggest a different lens or point of view to consider. Students and educators both interact with and learn from each other, expanding their knowledge from the others' experiences. Connectivism goes beyond the act of learning from discussion with others. Connectivism postulates that knowledge exists beyond the individual, either in other individuals or in databases. Learning is not knowing the information, but knowing how to obtain the information. Both theories are relevant to the use of social media in education as they postulate about learning a social environment.

Conceptual Framework

As mentioned previously, the theories that are relevant to this study are Social Constructivism and Connectivism. Both learning theories involve a social aspect. Social Constructivism allows individuals to develop meaning to the world around them while interacting with others (Churcher et al., 2014). Individuals incorporate the information gained through discourse with others into their current base of knowledge. The second relevant theory noted is Connectivism. This theory also includes an aspect of learning through social means. However, it involves current technology as well. Siemens (2005) stated that networks between

individuals are connected, which creates meanings and patterns. People rearrange these meanings and patterns into their existing base of knowledge. People sift through information gained and determine what is important and what they can discard. In Connectivism, it is important for people to know where to acquire knowledge, not what the knowledge is (Evans, 2014).

As the use of social media has become more prevalent in day-to-day life, educators have begun to use it in education. As mentioned previously, studies have been performed on high school students (Bartow, 2014), two-year colleges (Davis et al., 2015), four-year colleges (Evans, 2014), and distance learners (Gupta et al., 2013). Researchers have studied various social media platforms in many educational situations. Additionally, evidence suggests that social media can affect both academic performance and student engagement (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Evans, 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011).

While researchers have studied the effects of social media use in education, the exploration is scant. Additionally, there is limited research on those students attending high school. While one might assume the results would be the same as those in two-year colleges, four-year colleges, or distance learning classes, it is possible that the results would be different. High school students are developmentally different from their older counterparts. The goal of this research was to study the effects of social media integration into education for high school students. The researcher applied both the Social Constructivism and Connectivism learning theories, as those were relevant to the field. While Behaviorism and Cognitivism were viable learning theories, they were not used to frame this study. As they do not consider learning in a social environment or the use of technology in the assistance to learning, they would not adequately describe how one learned in a social media environment.

Student Outcomes

Students typically attend school to receive a degree, whether it a high school Diploma, a GED, or a higher education degree (Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate). Academic performance is important in determining if a student will graduate. The students need to obtain certain scores to pass and move along the predetermined path towards their degree. However, while academic performance is important, student engagement is as well. The academic performance of students not fully engaged in their school environment could suffer. Measuring both academic performance and student engagement can provide educators with the tools needed to inspire students to perform to the best of their ability.

While students can be inspired by external influences, such as their teachers, there is also an internal aspect that may drive them. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief that a task can be performed (Williams & Rhodes, 2016). The researchers further explain that it is not a prediction of who is motivated to accomplish a task. Instead, self-efficacy explains why someone is motivated to perform a task. Why would self-efficacy be important in the use of social media as an educational tool? Evidence has shown that a student's academic performance correlates positively with self-efficacy (Mateo, Makundu, Barnachea, & Paat, 2014). Furthermore, a study that investigated the self-efficacy of students using educational social media tools showed that they felt those tools would greatly enhance their performance, effectiveness, and productivity (Arpaci, 2017). This connection between academic performance and self-efficacy is important to note as many students already use social media in their daily lives. Involving a tool with which the students are familiar may enhance their self-efficacy, thus strengthening their academic performance.

Academic Performance

Researchers have often defined academic performance as grades and performance in class, including final GPA. However, according to Banai and Perin (2016), there is no one agreed upon definition of academic performance. The authors further note that researchers have used the following classifications for academic performance: an individual's success in school, grade point averages, exam scores, performance in the classroom, and standardized test scores. The exact definition of academic performance depends on what the researcher is studying. For example, Gupta et al. (2013) measured academic performance by the end-of-semester grades of the group they studied. Munoz et al. (2014) also included students' final grades in the class studied in their research. Junco et al. (2011) focused on the students' overall GPA for their first semester. These researchers also used students' high school GPA as a dependent variable to discover any other differences that may have resulted in the use of social media in their case studies. Davis et al. (2015) discussed both final class grades and overall GPA in their review of the literature. During experiments, the researcher decides how to define academic performance and can include final grades for a subject studied or overall GPA.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is how much time and effort a student invests into educational activities. These activities are linked to an individual's desired outcomes, whether it is more connectivity in the classroom, higher achievement, or learning skills outside of what the teacher requires in class (Junco et al., 2011). Engagement involves the energy a student expends in the classroom. Furthermore, engagement includes effort outside of the classroom. When a student participates outside of the classroom in the university experience (e.g., in student council or other campus-wide groups), student engagement is often heightened.

Social Media Use in Educational Institutions

Educators use social media in various educational institutions. College instructors at both the two-year and four-year college level use social media, as do high school teachers. There is one instance in the reviewed literature that showed a middle school teacher who used social media (Bartow, 2014). Due to the pervasiveness of social media, the integration of social media to the classroom is not as difficult as it would be if students were unfamiliar with the tools. However, educators must be aware that while students typically know how to use social media tools, there can be some ambiguity in their use in education. Churcher et al. (2014) noted that when a teacher integrated Facebook into the classroom, the students were concerned about how formal their language had to be in their assignments on the website. The authors also stated that some students were concerned about blurring the borders between their academic life and their social life online. Another concern that has arisen when adding social media to education is if the student is unaware of how to use the web tool. Not knowing how to use the web tool can lead to the student experiencing anxiety (Kivunja, 2015).

Classroom Learning

Traditionally, in the educational setting, students learn in the classroom. Unless they withdraw, individuals will attend school from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Once graduated from high school, some students have the choice of going to college to further their education. According to Shpancer (2004), students learn in the classroom as the instructor is considered an expert in the material and provides knowledge that is unavailable online. Students can also benefit from hands-on instruction from the educator. If students do not understand an aspect of the subject, the teacher can provide specific and focused attention when needed for clarification. Students listening to discourse between the teacher and other students can benefit

from the information. Finally, students will often think about a problem critically if teachers ask questions or offer suggestions.

High school. Bartow's (2014) research showed teachers are distinct types of teacher at any given time during the day. While some of the positions would happen regardless of the situation (e.g., *teacher as an instructor*), other types emerged with the addition of social media in the classroom. These were *teacher as a manager*, *teacher as a learner*, and *teacher as a change agent*. When the teacher took the manager role, the teacher would often use social media to organize the school day. Teachers also took the managerial opportunity to monitor and advise students on their digital citizenship. As a learner, the teacher often became the student. One teacher noted that she learned tips about social media tools from her more technologically adept students. Finally, Bartow (2014) noted the teachers were change agents. Teachers and students had to redefine the boundaries of their relationship as social media gave them access to each other outside the regular class period. Deciding to integrate social media into the curriculum was a notable change within the classroom.

Casey and Wells (2015) also focused on social media integration in high schools. However, the goal of their study was to take the results and remix them for the college level. The researchers defined remixing as manipulating ideas and experiences from one activity to apply them to a different activity. The research showed that peer modeling was beneficial within the high school class. Another aspect the authors discovered was how much the students enjoyed the online interaction with each other when discussing both course and non-course material.

College. Once students graduate high school or obtain a GED, they may continue their education by attending college. College provides a wide variety of classes that students can choose to take, depending on the major they have declared. In college, they can specialize their

educational career in a way not available in high school. If a student chose to be an accountant once graduating from high school, then many of the college classes would focus on accounting. The literature discusses both two-year colleges and four-year colleges. With a two-year college, a student will often obtain an Associate's Degree. A four-year college will provide a Bachelor's Degree. Students can also obtain a graduate degree at some four-year colleges.

Two-year colleges. Davis et al. (2015) discuss how there is little research on the use of social media in the two-year community college. They further state that what researchers know about social media use in education has primarily focused on universities and four-year colleges. As there was little research found, they chose to study how community colleges use social media. They selected a larger sample of community college leaders than had been used in previous studies. They also decided to send the surveys to a wide variety of leaders within the college, instead of just the Presidents. Their evidence showed that while many community colleges were using social media as only one-way communication (i.e., sending out tweets about events happening on campus), the leaders were aware of how valuable social media could be in actual interactions between the students. However, the community colleges were often not using the tools in that respect. The authors suggest that since evidence has shown a positive relationship between social media use and student engagement at the university level, researchers should perform more studies to discover the positive benefits of social media use at the community college level.

Four-year colleges. Researchers have conducted several studies at the four-year college and university level pertaining the integration of social media in education. They have studied the use across various disciplines as well. For example, researchers have performed studies in economics (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015), business (Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan,

2012; Evans, 2014; Mandviwalla et al., 2013), social work (Fang et al., 2014), nursing (Ferrara-Love, 2013), pre-health professionals (Junco et al., 2011), education (Kivunja, 2015; Munoz et al., 2014), and foreign language (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). One researcher studied six teachers and their use of social media in the classroom in six different courses, ranging from Food, Culture, and Technology to Introduction to Digital Studies (Zgheib, 2014). Research indicates that the use of social media can enhance many types of courses. Educators of any discipline can use social media to facilitate more interaction between students and the instructors.

Distance Learning. It is likely that when individuals think of social media use in education, they think of distance learning. Distance learning is education that does not require face-to-face, synchronous interaction. This type of education happens at a distance—from across the city to across the world (Gupta et al., 2013). Distance education classes often use computers, tablets, or mobile phones to connect students and teachers. However, one risk of distance education is that the students often never talk to each other (Poellhuber et al., 2011). While social media can connect the students to one another, not all engage in conversation. Evidence suggests that instructors should monitor the social media, as students do not always take the initiative to enter into discourse. Instructors have often posted questions within the social media tool to start a conversation (Munoz et al., 2014). A boost in communication is needed at times, as students will not always spontaneously start discussions and need guidance from their instructors.

One-To-One Technology

One-to-one technology in the classroom has become more prominent as technology has become cheaper and more mobile (Penuel, 2006). Because technology is cheaper, some schools and school districts are able to provide their students with equipment (e.g., laptops, Chrome

books, or tablets) where they were unable to do so before. Another aspect of one-to-one computing is Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), which is where the student provides their own devices to use in the classroom (Selwyn, Nemorin, Bulfin, & Johnson, 2017). Teachers should include the concept of one-to-one technology in the conversation about social media use in education. If the school has provided students with devices within the classroom, they can use these devices to access social media to complete assignments in the classroom. However, as evidence shows, not all benefits of one-to-one technology are positive (Selwyn et al., 2017). The authors discuss the realities of what a classroom must endure when educators introduce one-to-one technology to the students. There are times when the use of the technology is mundane and ordinary. Students are used to the devices and are not always enthusiastic about using something new or different. Additionally, even though the students use the technology in the schools, they are not able to do what they want to do when they want to do it. The rules and organization of the school day dictate how the teacher and the students interact in the classroom.

This study also shows that students were not always utilizing their devices to stimulate learning (Selwyn et al., 2017). Instead, the students were using their devices to study and perform school work (e.g., completing various coursework teachers had assigned). While the students were performing their roles of being students, they were not using their devices to their fullest potential and participating in the very social and collaborative nature of learning with technology. However, while the students may not have used their devices to their utmost advantage, the use of devices within the classroom did provide the students with an important skill. The students sharpened their ability to multitask and switch between their main work and other aspects of the computer, such as a dictionary or a calculator. In addition, the devices gave the students the opportunity to take a break and listen to music or read news feeds. The evidence

suggests that while there are some benefits to utilizing devices within the classroom, they could provide more benefits if used properly.

The Effects of Social Media Use in Education

Introducing social media as a component of education will affect how the instructor teaches and how the student learns. The traditional method of instructors lecturing or students reading presentation materials changes when teachers introduce social media as a learning tool. Students are participating innovatively by introducing new information to other students or discussing information outside of the regular classroom hours. However, these are not the only benefits that social media use in education can provide students. Research has shown that social media as a component of education affects both academic performance and student engagement.

Academic Performance

Academic performance can be defined in many ways, depending on the researcher. Researchers have studied end-of-semester grades (Gupta et al., 2013), final grades (Munoz et al., 2014), and overall semester GPAs (Junco et al., 2011). A student's academic performance can also determine whether he or she will persist in school. If students are not finding success academically, they can experience a lack of motivation. This lack of motivation can result in a student withdrawing from school. A good instructor attempts to determine what will assist students in making better grades. Could the use of social media in education one of the answers?

Twitter. There is less information about social media use in predicting academic performance than there is on student engagement. Additionally, what evidence there is can be confusing. Some evidence supports a positive relationship, while other evidence states social media has no effect on academic performance. In the study performed by Junco et al. (2011), the results showed that Twitter had a positive impact on students' grades. There were instances in

the study where students who used Twitter in the classroom created an impromptu study group. This spontaneity in joining to study could be one of the reasons why the relationship between social media and grades was a positive one in this study.

Facebook. A study of Facebook use in a college course showed comparable results. In this study by Ferrara-Love (2013), nurses involved in the experimental group received higher grades than those who were not. The author suggests a few reasons why this might be. First, the informal setting provided a place for students to ask for and receive assistance with study questions or homework. Second, the ability to study online took the students out of the day-to-day dealings of real life (i.e., children and spouses). Finally, the students could access the instructor at times other than in class. This way, they were not interrupting lecture time to ask questions or receive clarification.

There is little research on the influence of social media use on academic performance beyond those studies. However, some research suggests there is a positive correlation between academic performance and student engagement (Junco et al., 2011). Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that students who participate in classes with social media would have higher academic achievement. However, not all research supports this assessment. Davis et al. (2015) indicate that Facebook as an instructional tool does enhance academic achievement. The adverse effect they found was when students used Facebook as a socialization tool only. The researchers suggested that academic achievement could suffer when students spent non-educational time on social media. Leyrer-Jackson and Wilson (2017) go one step further in their research. The results of their study showed a possible decrease of academic achievement when social media was an addition to instruction. However, the researchers acknowledge there has been scant research on this topic. They suggest further research should explore not only the

results of social media in the classroom but also how instructors are incorporating the web tools into education.

Student Engagement

As mentioned previously, student engagement is the time and effort a student will devote to educational activities, whether in class or outside of class. Instructors are often searching for ways to promote student engagement due to the ways in which it benefits the student. Research suggests that student engagement promotes academic success and encourages students to complete their college career (Junco et al., 2011). Students who put forth energy and effort in any level of school will have a better chance of performing at a higher standard and staying in school. Therefore, the goal of instructors should be to inspire engagement among their students. The question becomes this: Can social media use in education facilitate student engagement?

Twitter. The literature review shows that Twitter is a popular social media tool for teachers to use. Not only is it easy to access, but it keeps students' posts concise due to the limit of 140 characters. The hashtag feature makes it easy for students and instructors to search for specific topics regardless of whom the author is. Al-Bahrani and Patel (2015) note that Twitter encourages engagement when students and instructors live tweet during events, such as Presidential debates. Not only does this provide current news to students, but it also engages them in a discussion about that new event.

Another study performed suggested a strong relationship between student engagement and the use of Twitter (Evans, 2014). The students who used Twitter were often engaged in other activities on campus. They also reported posting personal thoughts to share information with others. Junco et al. (2011) confirm a relationship between student engagement and Twitter usage. They used a control group that did not use Twitter and an experimental group that did.

The results showed that the experimental group had higher satisfaction and was more engaged in the class. Not only did the students feel more connected to one another, but they felt more connected to the faculty as well.

Ricoy and Feliz (2016) suggested that Twitter increased student engagement in several ways. In their study, students indicated an interest in and excitement about community learning with Twitter. They experienced a higher level of interaction with others when using the tool. This engagement led to improved academic achievement and mature communication between the students. The use of Twitter also inspired more interest in learning. The students were participating in the activities introduced by the teachers, whether presented on Twitter or in weekly web conferences. The students' engagement was elevated as shown by the interactions between students and faculty.

At the University of Texas in Dallas, a U.S. History professor included Twitter in her Spring 2009 semester (Rankin, 2009). This class started with 90 students and met Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Rankin chose to incorporate Twitter due to the ease of use as well as the ability for students to access Twitter on cell phones and laptops. The experiment consisted of posting in small group discussions with hashtags (#). Each group would often interact with other groups on Twitter through the hashtag feature. Rankin would circulate throughout the groups in class and answer any questions that were asked during the class period. At the end of the semester, Rankin felt her Twitter class was more engaged than classes that did not utilize social media. She also noted that students that would not participate in class did participate on Twitter. She suggested that it was easier for the students to type out thoughts instead of expressing them in class (Rankin, 2009). Rankin's experiment showed a level of engagement that might not have existed during a traditional lecture.

Facebook. Facebook is another social media tool that instructors use as a supplement to their classes. As studies suggested with Twitter, Facebook can provide a higher sense of engagement among students when incorporated in the classroom. According to Barczyk and Duncan (2012), when the teacher incorporated Facebook (and to some extent, YouTube) in an International Business class, the students showed significantly higher satisfaction than the students who did not use Facebook. Additionally, the students who used Facebook felt more connected to each other than those who did not. Students felt that using Facebook enhanced their learning. When asked if they would take another class with the instructor, the students stated they would if social media was a component of the coursework.

Other web tools. Twitter and Facebook are not the only available web tools educators can use. Google + is a popular social media tool that teachers have integrated into the classroom. One study of students suggested that when the teacher integrated Google + into the courses, the students felt more satisfied (Kivunja, 2015). The researcher noted that some students even remarked that they enjoyed the learning process. Alon and Herath (2014) discuss a study wherein an International Business instructor used YouTube as a supplement to the class. Their research showed that the students felt more productive in the class, enjoyed the class more, and that social media use was the most satisfying part of the course.

Buzzetto-More (2014) conducted a study of undergraduate students and their use of YouTube at a Mid-Atlantic institution in the spring of 2013. Teachers used YouTube in traditional classes, hybrid classes, and online classes. The results showed that students enjoyed the integration of YouTube into their courses. The students stated that YouTube increased their interest in the class and enhanced the professor's instruction. However, while all types of classes used YouTube, evidence indicated that online classes preferred its use more than other classes

did. Online students felt there was a greater value to the videos. The study did suggest that video length influenced the students. The researcher suggested that if educators incorporate YouTube into their course they should consider video duration and production (Buzzetto-More, 2014).

Evidence suggests that the addition of social media into the course, regardless of what the tool is, can heighten student engagement. Students report feeling more connected to each other and the instructor. Ferrara-Love (2013) noted that in her study that while students had access to two different web tools within the class, more students used Facebook. The students stated the informality of discussion on Facebook made it easier to use. Additionally, the students could share pictures with their postings, which led to a deeper understanding of what students were discussing. In his study, Kuh (2009) noted that while social media enhanced student interaction, distance learners interacted more with each other than in-class students did. The online students participated in an independent study as well as in a learning community, which heightened their engagement.

Chen, Lambert, and Guidry (2010) discovered a positive relationship between student engagement and the use of web tools in the classroom when examining results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) of 2008. The researchers discovered that students who used social media not only measured higher in student engagement but also employed more learning skills. They used both integrative and reflective learning as well as higher order thinking skills. Web-based technology appeared to have enhanced students' engagement as well as their ability to comprehend and use the information provided during the course.

However, there are contradictions in this research. Munoz et al. (2014) conducted a study in a Southern Florida research university. Over 88% of the student body identified as a

minority group (e.g., Hispanic, Black, or Other). The study consisted of a Twitter-online class, a Twitter-face-to-face class, and a Blackboard-online class. Surprisingly, the results showed that while the Twitter-online group showed more interest in the lives of their classmates, the same students reported being the least satisfied with the use of Twitter in the classroom. Due to the contradiction of these results to other studies, the researchers questioned if the contradictions were due to the students' cultural differences.

Styles of Learning

As mentioned previously, there are formal and informal styles of learning. Formal styles of learning are traditional classrooms wherein an instructor provides information for the students to learn. Informal styles of learning are those in which individuals learn on their own by searching for information (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). When an instructor supplements a course with social media, a student can learn in both a formal way and an informal way. The student formally learns when the teacher lectures or has discussions with the class. The student then informally learns when searching on the Internet for information to complete assignments on the social media platform. It is important that instructors take both types of learning into account when designing their course materials as students can often benefit from informal learning as well.

Formal Learning

Greenhow and Lewin (2016) discussed how formal learning was affected when teachers integrated social media into coursework. As the teacher directed the use of social media, there was a degree of formal learning when completing assignments. Teachers encouraged students to use social media within their projects and their day-to-day communications. The students used social media for a variety of reasons, including managing the work between groups of people,

sharing information with each other, sharing presentations, assessing students and teachers, and communicating with others in the class. The teachers recognized that social media added to the formal learning aspect of their classrooms, as conversations were easier for teachers and students to have. Not only did teachers and students share ideas and resources, but peer-review was easier to accomplish.

Informal Learning

The use of social media in Greenhow and Lewin's study resulted in a significant amount of informal learning as well (2016). The students had more autonomy, which allowed them to have freedom in searching for information. The projects were often self-directed by students, which afforded a greater flexibility. During these self-directed projects, the students formed networks that determined how they learned in both process and content without the teacher's influence. Another significant and unintended result of social media integration was that individuals outside of the classroom found the students' blogs and began to comment and interact with the students. An interaction between students and non-students brought an aspect into the educational process that the instructor did not intend. The interaction could only have been informal learning. Incorporating Facebook into the classroom provided an additional network of friends and friends of friends who were not involved in their course studies.

While the studies were teacher facilitated and considered formal learning, there were unseen aspects that arose from the use of social media that educators would regard as informal learning. The students' network often extended beyond their classroom and taught the students knowledge that the teacher had not intended. The use of social media in education has the potential to blur or even remove the boundaries between formal and informal learning. While

students may informally learn information that it is not correct, this blurring of the boundaries has the potential to enrich a students' education to an unexpected degree.

Pedagogy of the Social Media Classroom

If educators decide to integrate social media into education, the pedagogy should evolve to address this addition. According to Taylor (2015), students are already utilizing social media to create informal study groups and discuss schoolwork. Unfortunately, as the instructor is not involved with these informal sessions, there is little critical analysis or evaluation that occurs. There is no oversight to verify students are learning the correct information. If educators add social media to their courses, they can provide a broad range of benefits to the students. Not only can the teacher critique discussions and correct students who may be providing incorrect information, but social media can provide other aspects that can support student learning and engagement. Some of these aspects are push notifications to remind students of deadlines and expectations, student opportunity for content discourse and critique, and the ability for the instructor to create new assignments for the students to complete (Taylor, 2015).

Why should the pedagogy evolve? According to Kruger-Ross and Holcomb (2012), K-12 administration has underlying assumptions of how students learn. Educators assume that all individuals involved have certain beliefs, including that children learn by standards, teachers should assess learning by numerical data testing, teachers can measure learning, and all students demonstrate their learning ability in the same way. While these assumptions have been the norm, technology—more specifically, social media use—challenges these assumptions. Both social media and the Internet expand the horizons of how individuals learn. Balakrishnan, Teoh, Pourshafie, and Liew (2017) state that students between the age of 18 and 20 were born in the digital age. Therefore, they have always had access to social media and the Internet. They

believe that because of this familiarity, it is imperative for educators to reevaluate their teaching methodologies to include social media and other virtual tools in the educational process.

Kruger-Ross and Holcomb (2012) discuss a teacher that believes the underlying assumptions and the pedagogical methods teachers typically use. This teacher teaches and is an expert in biology. He requires his students to buy a specific biology textbook. His lectures are derived from both the textbook and his expert knowledge. He requires students to take both mid-terms and finals. One student asked if she could use YouTube to learn additional information about biology and he refused. He stated that he did not trust what YouTube had to offer. Because the pedagogy had not expanded to include social media use, his students were unable to learn from different sources. As technology can both prove assumptions wrong and expand the boundaries of how students learn, pedagogical methods should adjust to address social media in the classroom.

It is imperative that educators expand pedagogy in those classrooms that will be using the tools. Furthermore, Merle and Freberg (2016) suggest that this pedagogy should be evident in both the college and individual departments within the college. Their study showed that students were surprised when their professor included both social media contact information on the syllabus as well as an assignment that used social media. The inclusion of social media pedagogy would provide both the educator and the student structure when using the tools in the classroom. The educator can provide the kind of critical assessment needed to guarantee the students are receiving the richest education possible. Updating the pedagogy would provide the students with the confidence that they are using the web tools appropriately while benefiting from its use.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media Use

As expected, research has shown both advantages and disadvantages of social media use in the classroom. If instructors choose to use social media in conjunction with their courses, then they must consider various aspects. Students often become more engaged when teachers incorporate social media in the classroom (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Buzzetto-More, 2014; Chen et al., 2010; Evans, 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Kuh, 2009; Rankin, 2009; Ricoy & Feliz, 2016). Additionally, the use of social media can provide students with experiences not had in the traditional classroom (Krutka & Carpenter, 2016). For instance, social media can provide students with access to individuals (e.g., educators, authors, and community members) that they otherwise would not have had. Social media provides students with the opportunity to complete assignments and study when and where works best for students. A student can be at a coffee shop at 9:00 p.m. on a Sunday night completing assignments and talking to other students via the web tools. However, some unforeseen outcomes in the learning environment can arise from the integration of social media. Before implementing social media in an educational setting, the instructor should become familiar with the advantages and disadvantages to determine if the use is appropriate for the course and its students.

Advantages of Social Media Use

The advantages to using social media in education are numerous and indicated by several researchers. Zgheib (2014) noted faculty perceptions of how social media affected their classes. One advantage to social media use is that when students post work online, they will often strive to make the assignment perfect. This extra effort from the student is because the entire class will read the assignment, which makes the poster vulnerable. Visibility of work also leads to peer

learning. One student may share knowledge unknown to another. The sharing of knowledge lends itself to both the Social Constructivism and Connectivism theories, where the very nature of interacting with other individuals and sharing both knowledge and experience leads to increased learning.

This sharing of information is paramount to the social media experience. As social media provides a centralized location for individuals to share their knowledge, it is reasonable that this would be an advantage. Another advantage of social media use is that educators or students provide links to previously unknown articles or resources (Kim, 2017). In this study, the most mentioned advantage of social media use was that faculty would share news sites or other electronic resources with students. These links provided students the opportunity to explore news or opinions they otherwise may have never considered. Links to news articles are not the only valuable information shared on social media. Students in research conducted by Khan, Kend, and Robertson (2016) stated that they would share everything from scans of the course required textbook to practice exam answers. This sharing extended to actual work as well. The students would exchange assignment files as well as discuss various aspects of their work.

A third advantage noted by several researchers was that the discussions in the classroom could extend past the physical course (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Bartow, 2014; Churcher et al., 2014; Harris & Rea, 2009; Khan et al., 2016; Krutka & Carpenter, 2016; Zgheib, 2014). Students and faculty can connect at any time of day to discuss classroom activities or post assignments. If students want to ask a question in class but are too shy to do so, they can post the question online to obtain the answer. It is often easier for students who do not like to speak in front of others to discuss coursework online in the privacy of their home or a computer lab. Additionally, students can consider a different point of view when reading students' work on the

discussion board. While these activities can happen in class, when the class period ends, the discussion stops. When students are online, the discussion can continue whenever the next student or instructor posts.

Not only can students post at any time of day, but they also can do so at their own pace (McCarthy, 2010). This extended time to post can be helpful, as it gives students the opportunity to think about what they want to convey to their cohort. Not only are they not put on the spot, but they also can take the time needed to formulate the perfect response. Furthermore, within their reply, they can provide links to relevant websites that will support their argument. Providing other sources for their discussion strengthens the students' skill of building a case and providing supporting documentation. Other students can post a response that will further support or refute the original post. Of course, students must be cognizant not to miss important deadlines when using social media. The individuals must be motivated to reply to their classmates. If they do not participate, students' grades may suffer.

Because of the ability to post whenever they want, students often feel more connected (Harris & Rea, 2009; Zgheib, 2014). There are times that the discussion online can go beyond coursework. One instance noted by Junco et al. (2011) was a student whose Twitter status stated he wanted to harm himself. Another student saw the tweet and immediately began to talk to him, which eventually calmed the original student. This provided time for a faculty member to realize there was a problem. The faculty member met with the student to provide the necessary help. It is quite possible that the connection between the two students kept the first student from doing something drastic.

The ability to build relationships is a key factor in social media use in education. Having the capacity to communicate online for classroom discussion can benefit those students who are

too shy to speak in class (Balakrishnan, 2017). Some students find it less intimidating to respond to words on a screen than it is to stand up and talk. In the study performed by McCarthy (2010), students were in their first year of school and did not know each other. The students used Facebook to identify each other and began building relationships. Because the students knew their classmates' names and had conversations on a familiar platform, they felt using Facebook for class assignments was beneficial. They stated that they developed relationships that might not have occurred otherwise. Research performed by Hung and Yuen (2010) echoed this sentiment. One student in this study stated that interacting with other students online made communicating in person more comfortable.

Another advantage of social media use is the moral support it can provide to others. In one study of teachers using social media, the researchers would provide guidance and encouragement through Twitter (Goodyear, Casey, & Kirk, 2014). As the teachers were attempting something new in the classroom, they were often anxious. The researchers could reinforce the actions of the teachers by retweeting their messages, which allowed other teachers to view those ideas. Additionally, as members of the virtual community knew the researchers well, professionals outside of the school could see the retweets. These retweets provided a sense of a job well done for the teachers. This encouragement built the teachers' self-esteem, as well as their comfort level with their decisions. They became comfortable discussing changes amongst themselves. These discussions led to more pedagogical change within the school without the researchers' influence or suggestions.

Social media use in education has other important advantages. On a scholarly level, individuals who might have never met otherwise can meet on Facebook or Twitter due to their similar research interests. They can communicate easily, regardless of what city, state, or

country in which they live using live chat, text, or video. Furthermore, with translation tools online, they can talk to each other even if they speak different languages. The advent of social media has expanded the educational world (Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Krutka & Carpenter, 2016).

Research has suggested that social media use in the classroom provides students with the idea of how businesses operate. Students are aware that business is becoming more global. When a foreign language class used social media as a supplement and required the students to work together to complete assignments, the students became aware of how a business team might work (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). The evidence suggested that students would collaborate in their work. With the use of social media, all students who were involved knew what other students were doing and who was responsible for what work. Additionally, the collaboration often focused on the bigger picture of the assignment instead of the tiny details. The study by Crăciun and Bunoiiu (2015) corroborated this when science students reported that they felt the Web 2.0 tools are useful as they can be used in a professional application. The students also acknowledge that these skills are vital in the 21st century.

Another positive aspect of social media is that it can be customizable for the students' needs. At Temple University, the business school created and began using their social media platform in 2008. The idea was to create a platform based on content-management and a social network that contained friending, private messages, and member profiles. This system is the Fox MIS Community. It provides a place for business students to create their e-portfolio that can be used to show prospective employers. Social media tools and platforms can be built specifically for a college and can be highly customizable (Mandviwalla et al., 2013).

Finally, with social media, students and instructors can provide richer examples than what a student may receive in a traditional classroom. For instance, if students have a question about a specific bone, they can post a picture for visual reference. Additionally, if a student's post is incorrect or incomplete, a student or instructor can clarify and ask follow-up questions to understand information the individual needs. A clarification on a post can lead to better understanding for all students reading the posts, even if the student did not participate in the discussion (Churcher et al., 2014).

Disadvantages of Social Media Use

One of the significant disadvantages of social media use in education is the lack of privacy. Once individuals post something online, then it is available for all to see. While only students in the course may be privy to the course group, other students are still able to read the posts. This lack of privacy makes students vulnerable when they post (Harris & Rea, 2009). If a teacher is using a public social media tool, unscrupulous individuals can find and use students' information for identity theft (boyd and Ellison, 2008). Students may also have concerns with what other individuals write online. In one case study, Fang et al. (2014) discussed a student that had written something offensive about another student online. The second student observed fellow students and strangers commenting on this post and became extremely upset. Once someone posts something on the Internet, it is there for all to see. Any reasonable amount of privacy a student had before the advent of social media is gone.

Ricoy and Feliz (2016) discuss a study that involved the use of Twitter in education. During the initial phase, there were several disadvantages when the teacher integrated social media into the course. One issue was that there was a lack of creativity. At the beginning of the course, the students did not involve much depth or content to their tweets. They often replied to

questions with one-word answers. A second issue noted was that individuals did not always interact with others. Not only were there few retweets, but the students chose not to involve themselves in others' conversations. Finally, the researchers noted that students had technical difficulties. Those who were unfamiliar with Twitter had trouble replying to and interacting with other students. While the educators eventually solved these problems, these problems did exist in the beginning. They could exist for other educators in other applications.

Another disadvantage is that students may not always have access to equipment (Harris & Rea, 2009). To access social media, an individual must have access to the Internet, as well as a computer, a tablet, or a smartphone. If the student does not have the equipment, then the campus-wide computer lab is available. However, labs are not always open all hours of the day. If the lab is not open, then the student is unable to access social media at any time as other students can. Because of this, students may miss impromptu study groups or meaningful discussions during which they could have deepened their knowledge. A lack of access outside of the classroom is important for teachers to consider when deciding if they should integrate social media into their courses. If the students are unable to access the web tools, they will be unable to participate.

Students and teachers alike often have anxiety when dealing with social media in education. If the student or teacher has not worked with the web tool before, the individual may have anxiety during the learning process. Anxiety when using a new tool was one concern of students attempting to learn Google + in research conducted by Kivunja (2015). Students may still have anxiety once they learn the tool as they are often unsure how the instructor will grade the work. The addition of social media in the classroom changes the traditional style of class (e.g., lecturing and testing). Students may be uncomfortable if the instructor is grading them by

participation in social media or if they are unsure exactly how to complete the assignment. To alleviate concerns, the instructor should provide clear instructions and strong examples. A better description of what the teacher expects can lead to a better understanding and less anxiety for the student (Churcher et al., 2014).

Another disadvantage that can arise is if the instructor gives students too many choices. While some teachers will decide which web tool to use in class, some teachers give students a list of web tools and let them choose which they will use. The ability to choose their web tools can give students needed freedom to expand learning how they see fit, but it can also cause undue stress. If there are a wide variety of tools the teacher is offering, the students may have difficulty deciding which to use and which would best fit their needs. They may be unable to understand the purpose of each tool, as well as how to use it. The students may not have the time to go through all the tools to determine which would work best (Väljataga & Fiedler, 2009). Teachers should be cognizant of this and decide on one or two tools for the students to use as not to overwhelm them with choices.

Finally, some students are resistant to working in groups. They may feel that collaborating online is not only because of a lack of resources on the teacher's part, but that collaboration with others can blur the lines of ownership. Students worry that others may not do their fair share, yet receive full points for the work completed (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). If students notice that others are obtaining full credit for less work, it can lead to other students deciding to work less. They may feel that if not all students are putting forth their best effort, then they should not either. On the other hand, very conscientious students will do more work than they would have had to do if all students had been participating fully. Either situation can lead to less interest, as well as a feeling of bitterness for the students.

Ethics in Social Media Use

While the ethical concerns of social media use can—and should—be noted when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of social media use, it is an important enough topic that it should stand alone. There are major concerns of which individuals should be aware when using social media in education. Fang et al. (2014) discussed an issue that arose in their research. One social worker student discussed potentially personally identifiable information on her social media status. This discussion of information could have resulted in the disclosure of the patient's identity, which would be a serious violation of the person's privacy. As this was a healthcare setting, the consequences could have been catastrophic for the student. Because this individual was involved in counseling, she could have very well violated the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). This Act seeks to protect individuals' medical records as well as their privacy (United States Department of Health & Human Services, n.d.). As the student was a healthcare professional, the information she obtained during the counseling of her patients was bound to confidentiality required by HIPAA. Some of what the Act protects is the treatment an individual is receiving as well as any information that can identify the person. Thus, students working toward their degrees in social work—or any other healthcare field—must be aware that discussing a patient's information on social media is both an ethical and criminal violation.

Healthcare and disclosure of personal information are not the only areas in which an ethical situation can occur in education. Policymakers and school administrators often discuss what educators should and should not post online. Warnick, Bitters, Falk, and Kim (2016) argue that teachers should be held accountable if their social media sites show educators in an unflattering light. One area they suggest may damage a teacher's ability to teach is inappropriate

relationships with students online. Kim (2017) states that educators can cross professional boundaries when they spend time interacting with students online in a casual way. A casual relationship can damage the other students' ability to see the teacher as the authority in the classroom. Warnick et al. (2016) note that inappropriate behavior online can damage the teacher's reputation and ability to teach effectively. They suggest that if a teacher posts a video that shows reckless or illegal behavior, it is reasonable to assume that some students may want to imitate the teacher's actions. One suggestion to combat these possibilities is that if teachers want to incorporate social media into the classroom, they should set up an account specifically for the class. Personal accounts and classroom accounts should remain separate.

Conclusion

Evidence suggests that social media use in education can heighten both academic performance and student engagement. Researchers have studied the effects of social media on all levels of schooling. However, it appears there has been less study at the high school level. As those students in high school are often at different stages of their lives than college students, it is beneficial to determine how incorporating social media in education can affect them. Would they have the same level of academic performance and student engagement that has researchers have found on the university and distance learning level? It is vital for educators to be aware of the effects as social media is becoming more prevalent in education. Schools are pushing educators to produce smarter students. If social media integration can assist in building students' academic success, the educators should investigate integrating the tools into their classrooms.

There are specific issues that an instructor must address before including social media in class. The students and instructors should be aware that all privacy is lost once the individual posts online. Students often forget about the loss of privacy, which can lead to inappropriate

discussions or ethical issues. Instructors should also be prepared to provide examples or clear instructions to students to alleviate anxiety that can occur. If students do not understand the assignment, they may experience undue stress that can affect their success. Finally, students and instructors should remember that there is someone on the other side of the screen. Even words in text form can harm an individual. The class members should have respect for others regardless of the situation. One can disagree with another without being offensive and degrading. However, with these caveats, evidence has shown that social media can propel students into a deeper learning and higher student engagement. It may take more than one semester or quarter for an instructor to address all the issues, but research thus far shows that social media appears to be more beneficial in education than not.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative collective case study was to document how a group of 11th-grade English students and their teacher experienced the incorporation of social media into the classroom. If educators have a solid understanding of both student and teacher perceptions and experiences when using social media in the classroom, they will have the tools needed to properly design and implement a curriculum that involves the use of social media. As this study sought to investigate the experiences and perceptions of the teacher and her students, a qualitative approach was appropriate. Within the qualitative approaches, the most suitable type of study was the collective case study. According to Creswell (2013), the case study is one wherein the researcher explores a case, or cases, happening in real-time. The researcher in a case study obtains data from more than one source, such as documents, interviews, or observations.

One important characteristic of a case study is that it provides a bounded system from which to gather evidence. A bounded system is defined as "...a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Furthermore, the collective case study was more appropriate in this study than a single case study due to the nature of the classes taught. Creswell (2013) described the collective case study as one that had one overarching topic and several cases, or bonded systems. In this study, the topic was social media use in a high school English class, and the cases were the 11th-grade English classes that used social media in instruction and 11th-grade English classes that did not use social media in instruction. The collective case study is often used to show different perspectives of an issue. As there were students using social media and students not using social media, it was important to discuss the two.

After a six-week period of social media instruction, the researcher interviewed the teacher and provided surveys to the students for them to discuss how they experienced social media incorporation into the English classroom. This qualitative approach allowed the researcher to delve into the participants' experiences as described in their own words. The researcher determined that in this study, an interview would have been the best way to obtain information. According to Merriam (2009), the interview is a sufficient data collecting method when the researcher is unable to observe behavior or how individuals experience their day-to-day lives. Because the researcher did not sit in the English classes or have access to the discussion boards online, an interview would have been appropriate for both teachers and students. The teacher was interviewed one-on-one while the researcher would have sorted the students into focus groups for interviewing purposes. However, because of challenges with obtaining a sample of students to create the focus groups, the researcher instead provided an anonymous questionnaire to each student. A questionnaire was appropriate in this instance as this method can still provide data while protecting the students' anonymity (Creswell, 2012).

Research Questions

The overarching research questions presented were:

- How do students experience the use of social media in a high school English class?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' academic achievement, as experienced by the students?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' engagement, as experienced by the students?
- How does an 11th grade English teacher experience the use of social media in her class?

Evidence has shown that at the college level and in distance learning, there are positive effects on both academic performance (Davis et al., 2015; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011) and student engagement (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Evans, 2014, Junco et al., 2011, Kivunja, 2015; Rankin, 2009, Ricoy & Feliz, 2016). Therefore, it was vital to study those same effects on high school students and their teachers. This will add their voices to the discourse about incorporating social media tools into the high school curriculum. Moreover, this study may prove valuable for high school educators to consider when deciding on implementing social media into the high school classroom.

Setting

The setting of this study was one of the oldest public schools in a parish in northwest Louisiana, with approximately 2,200 students enrolled in grades nine through twelve. The student/teacher ratio was 21:1. The population of the school consisted of 48% White, 44% African-American, 4% Hispanic, and 2% Asian or Native American/Alaskan Native (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016). This site was the best choice for the researcher due to the familiarity with the teacher, as well as the teacher's interest in social media use in the classroom. As the teachers in this school district have the option to add a social media component to their curriculum, the teacher could integrate these web tools into her classroom without special permissions from the school administration. Additionally, obtaining the necessary permissions from the school board to conduct the study in this setting was not an arduous task.

Participants/Sample

The teacher in this study was given the pseudonym "Darlene" throughout this inquiry. The sample population is both Darlene and all her students in five 11th-grade enriched English

classes. According to Darlene, the school district defines enriched students as those who exhibit average performance in the specified subject area (personal communication, September 10, 2016). Originally, Darlene was going to incorporate social media into one English class in the morning and one English class in the afternoon. This incorporation would have resulted in Darlene teaching three English classes traditionally and two enhanced with social media. However, when she began the integration of social media into the classroom, she determined that it would be beneficial for more of her students to participate in the classes with social media. After discussing it with the researcher, Darlene integrated social media into four of her five English classes. Therefore, the researcher had access to more students who experienced the incorporation of social media.

According to Merriam (2009), within a case study, two levels of sampling are needed to provide an appropriate sample. The proposed plan to obtain a sample for this study was as follows: The researcher would choose participants from all the 11th-grade English class students Darlene taught. To choose these participants, the researcher created assent forms for the social media students (see Appendix A) and for the non-social media students (see Appendix B). As these students were all presumed to be minors, their parents also had to sign consent forms. The researcher provided both the social media parents and non-social media parents consent forms to sign (see Appendices C and D). Darlene was given a consent form as well, which she signed and returned to the researcher to participate in the study (see Appendix E).

The original proposal stated that once the students returned the assent and consent forms, signed by the student and parent respectively, the students would be assigned a number to identify them within the study. The researcher planned to utilize True Random Number Generator (RANDOM.ORG, 2017) to provide a list of numbers that would become the

participant sample, slated to work in focus groups. A focus group is a group of individuals brought together to discuss or be interviewed about a topic (Merriam, 2009). Merriam further suggested that the focus group contain between six and ten individuals. Once the researcher conducted the focus groups, Level 2 would begin, in which a one-to-one interview with Darlene would take place. This interview would be vital to the study as the teacher would provide her experience in both working with social media in the English classroom and observing the students as they adjusted to the new assignments. During this process, the students, parents, or teacher could cease all involvement in the study at any time without consequence.

Data

The researcher presented her proposal to her dissertation committee in January 2017. IRB granted permission to begin the study in February 2017. The period for social media instruction lasted from March 13, 2017, to April 28, 2017, which resulted in six weeks of instruction. Darlene also integrated Turnitin.com into her classroom instruction (Turnitin, LLC., 2017). This web tool gave Darlene the ability to create discussion boards for the assignments she gave the students. When the researcher questioned what activities the students were required to do using Turnitin.com, Darlene reported that they turned in essays as well as had discussions on specific questions she provided. One of the assignments she gave the students was a webquest. She explained that:

A webquest is when they use Internet sites to locate information in response to the questions I've created. Usually, the purpose is to build background information. For example, I might give them questions about the Salem Witch Trials and the Red Scare before we read *The Crucible* (personal communication, May 27, 2017).

Three weeks before the end of the period slated for social media incorporation, Darlene gave the students the assent and consent forms to take home to their parents. The researcher provided context for her to explain the purpose of the forms and of what the study would consist (see Appendix F). The researcher provided her name, phone number, and email within this document so that students or parents could contact her if they had any questions. Darlene informed the researcher that after three more weeks, not one student had returned the forms. She stated that some of the students were anxious about participating in a focus group and discussing educational information with someone that they did not know (personal communication, April 20, 2017). Additionally, both Darlene and the researcher surmised that as it was so close to the end of the school year, the students were taking exams and focusing on other end-of-the-year activities. It was possible that they chose to forgo participating in the study, as it was not a requirement for Darlene's English class.

To understand the student experience of social media in the classroom, permission was sought to use the interview template as an open-ended questionnaire that the students would take in class. As such, this change required IRB approval. In this modification, the researcher requested permission to provide the social media and non-social media students with an in-class anonymous survey to be administered by Darlene (see Appendices G and H). They were also to receive an opt-out form (see Appendices I and J). If the students or their parents signed the opt-out form, then they would not have been given the survey. Otherwise, Darlene would administer the survey to the students during their class period to complete. The IRB approved this amendment in May 2017.

The researcher provided a script for Darlene to use when passing out the opt-out forms to the students (see Appendix K). She then gave the students the surveys during the last week of

school, during exam week. Due to this, she was unable to provide the questionnaire to one of the four social media classrooms. Of those students that received the opt-out forms, only four students returned them. These four students did not take the survey. The resulting total of surveys that the researcher received from Darlene were 92 social media students and 22 non-social media students.

Because the teacher gave these surveys during class time, the researcher was unable to follow-up or more fully develop the answers of the individuals by way of probing. This method may have provided further information by expanding upon what was previously said (Merriam, 2009). The questions in the students' survey were open-ended (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009) that asked the students to provide stories or descriptive data about their experiences when using social media both in the English classroom and recreationally (Merriam, 2009). While the researcher would have preferred to interview the students in a focus group, the survey method still provided rich descriptions from the students about their beliefs and attitudes toward social media use in the educational system.

Once Darlene returned the surveys to the researcher, she created a Microsoft Word document file for each question. In each document, the researcher listed the answers to that question. The researcher verified that she entered each response in the order in which she received the surveys. The researcher used Saturate, an online qualitative coding software (Sillito, 2013) to code the data. This software provides its users with notebooks. Within the notebooks, the user can create a page to enter data. There appeared to be no limit to the number of pages one could add to a notebook. The researcher entered each Word document into a separate page in Saturate. As the software saved the page, it numbered each paragraph or individual answer. The researcher then numbered each survey to match. Therefore, she could

easily refer to a handwritten survey when needed for clarification. For example, on survey number 21, each paragraph numbered 21 in the pages on Saturate belonged to that survey.

While the researcher obtained the students' information via survey, she was still able to interview Darlene (see Appendix L). These questions were open-ended as suggested by Creswell (2012) and Merriam (2009). The researcher recorded this interview with an application on the researcher's iPhone called Awesome Voice Recorder Pro (Newkline Co., Ltd., 2016). The researcher then transcribed the interview by hand before sending it to Darlene for member checking. Member checking is the process in which participants are invited to review the information gathered by the researcher (Creswell, 2012). Darlene emailed additional comments and clarifications back to the researcher, which she entered on a separate page in Saturate. Only pseudonyms and numbers were used both in the Word documents and on Saturate, as to prevent any confidentiality issues if there was a data breach of the researcher's computer or the website. It was then that the researcher coded and analyzed the information provided by Darlene and her students.

Analysis

As mentioned previously, the survey answers of the students and the interview by Darlene were hand transcribed into Microsoft Word documents. As the researcher transcribed the interview and the surveys, she began to take note of common ideas by bolding and highlighting words or possible categories (Saldaña, 2011), which is a part of the data analysis process. Creswell (2012) suggests hand analysis for small databases and computer analysis for larger databases. As there were over 100 surveys, as well as an interview and supplemental information, the researcher chose to use software to assist with coding. The software used was Saturate, which the researcher previously described.

The researcher then used *in vivo* coding, which is coding where the participants' actual words become the codes (Creswell, 2012; Saldaña, 2011). As the researcher coded each page in Saturate, she assigned categories, depending on the answers of the students. For example, when the students discussed social media used outside of the classroom, the researcher categorized those answers as "web tool used outside of classroom." These categories allowed the researcher to refer to the original question when reviewing codes. As she coded, she was particularly attentive to common themes that occurred across surveys. She jotted the summary of those answers down on a second Microsoft Word document, which began the creation of the main themes. When writing these summaries, she referred to her theoretical framework to determine if the framework supported the students' answers. Saldaña (2011) suggests writing analytical memos while transcribing and coding. He states that analytical memos are free form writing exercises containing the researcher's interpretation of the data. As the researcher coded, she created memos in Saturate, referring to the summaries that she determined and copied to her secondary Word document.

Once the researcher completed the coding, she reviewed the pages in Saturate once again to determine any other codes that may have been missed during the first analysis, as suggested by Creswell (2012). As the researcher reviewed the pages, she copied any other prominent ideas that were common to both teacher and students. The researcher then referred to her list of summaries and reduced these codes to a set of overarching themes (Creswell, 2012; Saldaña, 2011). Creswell (2012) suggests five to seven themes that emerge that are unique, frequent, have support from other sources, or that one may expect when studying the phenomenon. While the researcher originally had nine overarching themes, she reduced them to a final count of five.

To assure validity throughout the transcription and coding process, Darlene was given the opportunity to member check her transcript. She reviewed the transcription and offered more information to further explain some of the thoughts in which she felt needed more clarification. Creswell (2012) also suggests triangulation as another way to validate results. Triangulation is the method of comparing evidence from various sources (e.g., other individuals, documents, or other types of collected data). The researcher corroborated the information provided by both the teacher and her students to determine if the data supported the resulting themes.

Participant Rights

This study focused on the perceptions of the teacher and students when integrating social media in 11th-grade English classes. The researcher obtained permission to perform the study from University of New England's Institutional Review Board and the administration of the selected school. The researcher then provided a consent form to the teacher (see Appendix E), who then provided opt-out forms to the students on behalf of the researcher (see Appendices I & J). The researcher referred to the teacher in this study with a pseudonym throughout this text and any other materials associated with this study. The students answered the surveys in class and did not meet the researcher at any point in time during the study. The researcher numbered the surveys, which are used to refer to the students in Chapters 4 and 5. These steps ensure anonymity for the teacher and the students for the duration of this study. The students, as well as the teacher, had the choice to remove themselves from the study at any time.

Limitations to this Study

During this study, the researcher determined several limitations that applied to the group of participants and their results. One limitation was that one English teacher's students in one school created the sample. Therefore, the results may differ from another studied group of

students. Enriched students in another school district may have different outcomes. Students in the southern United States have had experiences unique to the South, influencing their perceptions. Additionally, the students that attend the school studied are from various socioeconomic groups, ranging from below poverty level to upper class. It is reasonable to assume that samples of students made up from multiple socioeconomic groups have varying degrees of access to technology, which affects their perceptions of the use of technology in school. If a researcher sampled a group of students from another subject or grade level, the perceptions and experiences may change. As the researcher did not test the findings for statistical significance, one cannot assume that the results would be true for all 11th-grade enriched English students (Atieno, 2009). Finally, another limitation was that the researcher gave the students a survey instead of interviewing them. Because of this, the researcher did not have the opportunity to probe further when the students gave answers. There were several instances throughout the surveys that the researcher did not understand what the student meant and could not properly interpret what the student intended. The researcher took care not to use any of those answers in her findings as she did not want to misrepresent the data.

Finally, the researcher was not involved with the school or its administration. The only involvement of the researcher with anyone connected to the high school is that the researcher knows the teacher on a social level. This teacher was chosen to participate in the study because of the researcher's knowledge of the teacher's interest in the use of social media in education.

Usefulness of Findings to Stakeholders

If the research were to show a positive effect on academic achievement or student engagement when social media was used in education, this would lend credence to educators' arguments that they should integrate social media into the curriculum. If there were no positive

effects or a negative effect, this could prompt administrators to discontinue use for those educators who have social media use in their classroom. Additionally, this study can lend a voice to both students and teachers to determine how they view the usefulness of social media use. As there is little evidence as to how high school students and teachers view social media use in education, this research can provide information that is missing in the general body of literature. This information is vital to the research as the use of social media applications continues to be more prevalent in an individual's everyday life.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods that were used to gather data for the study of social media use in a high school English classroom. The students underwent a teaching period with or without the addition of social media in their instruction. The students were given surveys with open-ended questions to describe their experiences with social media, both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. The teacher was interviewed to determine how she experienced the addition of social media to the classroom. The data was coded by the researcher to determine commonalities that existed between the students and the teacher. The results were then analyzed, which the researcher will describe in the following chapters.

This study will add to the existing body of literature discussing social media use in the educational field, more specifically in the 11th-grade English classroom. The importance of this study is that there is limited research focusing on high school students and their experiences. Therefore, the results of this study will add to the body of knowledge, enriching what little research there is. This study is vital as social media use in education becomes more prevalent, and school districts allow their high school teachers access to various platforms to incorporate into the classroom. The data collected will provide insight into the experiences and perceptions

of both the English teacher and her students, which can assist administrators in determining whether social media incorporation would be a good fit for their schools.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this collective case study was to explore how 11th-grade English students and their teacher experienced the integration of social media into the classroom as an additional learning tool. Research presented in the literature review showed a positive effect on both academic achievement and student engagement at the college level. However, as the researcher reviewed the literature, there appeared to be a scarce amount of literature describing research at the high school level. The very few studies including high school students focused on how the use of social media would affect the students as they went to college (Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015). It was important to the researcher to discover if social media integration into the high school arena could be as viable for those students while in high school, as it was for college students.

The research questions used to guide this study were as follows:

- How do students experience the use of social media in a high school English class?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' academic achievement, as experienced by the students?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' engagement, as experienced by the students?
- How does an 11th grade English teacher experience the use of social media in her class?

As the researcher collected and analyzed the data, specific themes began to emerge. Students discussed the ease of access and use with social media. Because coursework was on the Internet, there were times they could attend to school work outside of the classroom period. Another theme that emerged was for the comfort that shy and socially anxious students felt while

interacting in the classroom, while using social media. While these positive attributes were apparent in the data collected, there were also negative themes noted about the use of social media in their English classroom. These negative attributes included problems with the Internet or wi-fi connection, students preferring to turn in written assignments, the distraction of social media, the inability to view social media as anything other than entertainment, and the presence of bullying online when using social media in education.

As the researcher continued to analyze the data, more themes began to emerge. These themes centered on real-world experience, learning through discourse and viewing others' opinions, communicating with and connecting to others, and enjoying social media use in the classroom as an effective learning tool. Some of the students appeared to equate using social media in the classroom to various real-world experiences, such as how the students will complete assignments on the college level. They also discussed knowing where to find information online to answer their discussion board questions. The data showed that students enjoyed using the discussion boards because they could share their views, as well as understand other people's opinions. Some students felt the ability to agree or disagree with their fellow students' opinions was a valuable learning tool during the discussion board assignments. Students stated they enjoyed the communication with their fellow students, as well as the connection they felt to the others in their classroom. Finally, the data revealed that students enjoyed using social media in the classroom and felt it was a source of effective learning.

The researcher compared these themes to the study's research questions to determine if there was a consistency between the themes and the research questions. The researcher also referred to the literature review to compare the data gathered in this study with evidence collected in previous studies. This review of the previous research allowed the researcher to take

nine themes and condense them into five, as there were often similarities between two or more themes that allowed for a more overarching theme. This reevaluation led to the overarching themes as follows: Social Media as an Educational Tool, Gaining Real-World Experience through Technology, Learning through Discourse and Diverse Opinions, Communication and Connection, and Creating Interest. The similar themes noted previously were grouped together. These became the subthemes for these overarching themes. Specific examples from the participants will be provided to support the final overarching themes discovered during the data analysis.

Sample Description

Darlene, the teacher who participated in the research, was chosen because she had an interest in using social media in her classroom. According to her interview with the researcher, Darlene "...had read some things when I was doing some research for a graduate class about college students using Facebook for classroom discussion..." She became interested because while her 11th-grade students were not quite college age, they were close enough in age that she felt the use would benefit them. She was also aware that most, if not all, used social media on a personal level and could at least navigate their way through the technology.

Darlene taught five 11th-grade enriched English classes in a high school in a parish in Northwest Louisiana. The school system considers enriched students as average students in the specified subject area. Therefore, these students were not honors students, nor did they require remedial English instruction. The experience and perception of the average student appealed to the researcher as below average and above average students comprise a much smaller segment of society.

Darlene integrated social media into four of her five classes. Darlene taught the final class traditionally, in which she provided lectures to her students about Mark Twain and his book *Huckleberry Finn*. The social media classes consisted of discussion boards in which Darlene assigned the students questions about both Mark Twain and *Huckleberry Finn*. The students answered the questions and replied to others discussing why they agreed or disagreed with their fellow students. In total, there were 147 students in these five classes. Due to end-of-the-year time constraints, Darlene was able to provide the surveys to only four of her classes—one not using social media and three using social media. The researcher received 114 returned surveys.

Data Analysis Method

Darlene provided surveys to her four of her 11th-grade English classes on behalf of the researcher. One of the classes did not use social media in the classroom while the other three did. There were 114 surveys returned—22 were from the class that did not use social media and 92 were from the social media classes. The researcher created a separate Word document for each survey question and entered each student's answer on this document. The researcher then entered these documents into Saturate as separate pages. Entering them into this program gave each answer a number across documents, effectively giving all students a numeric identifier. For example, each answer labeled 21 was from the same student. Therefore, the researcher numbered the surveys for easy reference, as well as for a student identifier in the discussion portion of this study. Once the researcher entered the documents into Saturate, she began analyzing the data by using *in vivo* coding (Creswell, 2013; Saldaña, 2011).

The researcher also interviewed Darlene, recorded the session, and hand-transcribed the interview. Darlene was then asked to review the transcript for accuracy and further explanation, a process known as member checking (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009). After member

checking, Darlene presented additional information that was necessary for understanding her position as the educator in a social media classroom. The researcher then took both the original and supplementary information and created two Word documents. The researcher entered these documents into Saturate to begin the *in vivo* coding process. As the researcher coded and referred to the literature review, specific themes began to emerge. Several times the teacher and the students' *in vivo* coding echoed each other, creating patterns (Creswell, 2013). These patterns became the categories of overarching themes.

It is through comparing the surveys of the students, and the interview with Darlene that the data gathered was determined to be valid. When the researcher compared the two types of data collected (surveys and interviews), as well as the words of two or more individuals, she determined that more than one source supported the themes. Creswell (2012) described this as triangulation, which led to the validity of the themes determined. The following table shows the overarching themes, as well as subthemes, that the researcher identified through coding, data analysis, and triangulation.

Table 4.1

Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subtheme
Social Media as an Educational Tool	Easy to access and use Easier for shy/socially anxious students to use Negatives for using social media in the classroom
Gaining Real-World Experience through Technology	Real-world experience Knowing where to find information
Learning through Discourse and Diverse Opinions	Reflecting and learning during discourse and sharing thoughts Understanding and agreeing/disagreeing with others' opinions
Communication and Connection	Communication among peers Connection to others on social media
Creating Interest	Social media as a source of effective learning Social media was enjoyable to use

Description of Themes and Subthemes

As evidenced by Table 4.1, several themes and subthemes resulted from the data analysis. The themes and subthemes represent the data provided by Darlene and her students when experiencing social media integration into the classroom. The description of the themes and subthemes are as follows.

Theme #1: Social Media as an Educational Tool

Several students, as well as Darlene, noted the myriad reasons why teachers should use social media as an educational tool. One reason students appreciated social media is its easy access, because they were quite familiar with the format and had little difficulty using it. Another reason they liked using social media was that it was easier for introverted or shy students to participate in class. While there were positive aspects of using social media in the classroom, several students did indicate negative issues of which educators should be aware, including issues with the Internet or wi-fi connectivity and viewing social media as a distraction. Table 4.2 provides the subthemes and further overarching codes within Theme #1.

Table 4.2

Subthemes and Overarching Codes

Subtheme	Overarching Code
Easy to access and use	Accessibility/reliability of web tool/Internet Ability to use on phone or at home Familiarity with social media Easier to turn in/participate in class
Easier for shy/socially anxious students to use	
Negatives for using social media in the classroom	Problems when wi-fi or Internet was slow or down Preferring to turn in handwritten assignments Social media as a distraction Inability to see social media as an effective tool Bullying online

Subtheme #1: Easy to access and use. In this study, the students reported that social media was both easy to access and to use. While there were some concerns with the platform or the students' Internet, students felt that social media was readily available, affording them the opportunity to review and participate in assignments when convenient. If they were unable to log onto the platform on a computer, they could use their phones. Students were also familiar with other social media formats, making it easier for them to use the social media platform within the English class. Students also discussed how social media made it easier to participate in class and turn in assignments.

Accessibility/reliability of web tool and Internet. The accessibility of social media was a common thread throughout the surveys. Participant #41 stated, "It was easy to access and is not hard to use," while Participant #50 said, "It's very beneficial in our time because everyone uses and have [*sic*] access to the Internet." Participant #16 felt that "Turnitin.com was easy, because you just had to know your password and username." Participant #32 appreciated the fact that "my work doesn't get lost or misplaced." Participant #44 said, "It helps me not waste time and it's everywhere I go." The ability to access the platform, as well as their assignments and homework on the platform, seemed to appeal to the students.

While most students who mentioned accessibility were positive, several students specifically had issues with Turnitin.com. Turnitin.com is the program that Darlene used as her social media component. Participant #37 stated, "I think it's too difficult to navigate turnitin so I think I would've done better on paper." Participant #12 agreed, "Using turnitin was difficult for me. I don't know if it was the format or how tedious it was to actually turn stuff in." Participant #34 said that "Sometimes it was difficult because the website would not work and it was stressful not knowing if my assignment would submit or not." Participant #59 stated that "Turnitin.com,

for example, was really glitchy and the discussion board was often difficult to get used to.”

Participant #83 noted, “I didn’t like the slowness, due to everyone being on the app.” Educators should address these concerns if integrating Turnitin.com into their classroom. These discussions could alleviate possible frustration with the students.

Another issue with Turnitin.com was the apparent lack of notifications. Darlene said that students would often answer the discussion question, which would be followed by a reply from a classmate. However, the first student would not respond to the classmate’s comment.

Participant #96 noted issues with lack of notifications: “I didn’t like that most of the time I was unaware when something was posted...” The student’s unawareness prompted the researcher to ask Darlene if Turnitin.com provided notifications and she stated, “I don’t think it does.” Both Darlene and her students had issues with Turnitin.com due to the platform’s lack of notification skills. As Turnitin.com did not notify the students of replies, and because the students were not in the habit of spending time on the discussion boards, they did not necessarily check throughout the week. One of the changes Darlene stated she would implant in the future when using social media in her classroom is to start earlier in the year so her students would get into the habit of checking the site throughout the week. Beginning earlier in the year could eliminate some of the issues with discussions not continuing because students did not realize others had replied to them. Developing this habit would likely create richer and more in-depth discussions, as the students would continue the dialogue.

Ability to use on phone or at home. Several students appreciate the fact that they could use their phone for assignments. Participant #27 stated, “I would use my phone & talk to others,” while Participant #44 said, “I found it easy using social media because it doesn’t take much time to do and I have my phone everywhere so I can do it anywhere when I have time.”

This easy access to the social media site on the phone was a great appeal to the students. One student – Participant #67 – appreciated that “it wasn’t so complicated trying to hide our phones from the teacher.” While not all students had access to cellular phones, three students did mention cell phones as an advantage. The students had a device from which they could access their assignments at any point in the day. The data analysis appeared to support the assumption that this portability and convenience appealed to them as they could complete their assignments on their time instead of during the class period.

Completing assignments at home was an advantage for several students as well. Participant #96 stated, “I found it easy to be able to access certain assignments at home,” while Participant #49 agreed: “Using Turnitin.com was easy because it is accessible from home.” Participant #36 stated, “It was easy to access at home and provided an interesting way to complete the assignment.” It was possible for this student—and perhaps others—found this new way of completing assignments interesting enough that it created an enjoyment in school work, previously not felt by the students.

Familiarity with social media. Darlene admitted at the beginning of her interview that she was aware that most, if not all, of her students, used social media. She stated, “They really like social media. They spend a lot of time on it, even though they will admit that it’s a time suck or a waste of time. But. They like it. So, whatever works.” Her knowledge of their social media use was one factor in her willingness to participate in this study. When asked in the survey if the students used social media recreationally, all but 11 students affirmed that they use social media of some sort outside of the classroom for a wide variety of reasons. Therefore, it was not surprising that students liked using it in the classroom due to its familiarity.

Participant #5 enjoyed using social media in the English class “b/c [*sic*] I was already experienced with social media platforms, I was able to get around easily.” Participant #42 stated, “It made it easier to understand a familiar platform.” Participant #84 felt “...relaxed because I am so used to being on it.” Participant #26 noted, “It allowed us to connect with other students on a level we are familiar with.” Not all the students noted the familiarity of use in the surveys, but enough of them use social media that the familiarity could be one reason why they appreciated using social media in the classroom.

Easier to turn in/participate in assignments. Several students appreciated how easy it was to turn in an assignment on Turnitin.com. Their appreciation could be for several reasons, but one reason noted was illegible handwriting. Participant #86 stated, “I can type faster than I can write and text is cleaner than my handwriting.” Darlene agreed with this student. She noted that one of the reasons she wanted the students to turn in their work or participate in discussions online was because of their handwriting. She stated, “...because sometimes in class, they trade papers, and they read each other’s writing, and inevitably there’s always ‘How do you read this?’ You know, referring to the handwriting. And this eliminates the handwriting issue.” Darlene found it easier when grading papers, and as she saw in the classroom, the students found it easier to read as well. Both Darlene and the students’ assertions that the ease of writing assignments and reading the other students’ assignments is a significant issue when discussing the ease of turning in or participating in assignments. Therefore, the researcher assumed that when handwriting was not an issue when exchanging assignments to read, the students were neither self-conscious about their assignments nor struggling to read the other students’ work. Therefore, the ability to complete assignments in a typed format was appropriate within this subtheme.

While several students stated that using social media was easier, they did not always provide a reason as to why they felt this way. Participant #72 stated, “It’s easier to do assignments and more enjoyable,” while Participant #74 noted, “I didn’t have to bring the work to class.” Participant #51 said, “We should always use social media because it’s a much easier way of completing assignments.” One student appreciated how it gave more time for assignments. Participant #63 stated, “If I didn’t get to finish my work in class, I didn’t have to worry about finishing it because I had longer to do it since it’s due online.” Regardless of the reasons why students felt using social media was easier, enough students mentioned it to justify its use.

Subtheme #2: Easier for shy/socially anxious students to use. This subtheme was prominent throughout Darlene’s interview, as well as several of the surveys returned by the students. Darlene stated during her interview:

I think my introverts enjoyed the freedom of not worrying about having to try to be heard, in a classroom where, even on a good day, when they are not being noisy, and they are not being disruptive, and they are on task, there’s a certain level of low classroom buzz, background noise.

She further stated, “You don’t have to do anything face-to-face, which, you know, even if you’re not an introvert, can be intimidating.” According to the students’ surveys, the fear and anxiety of standing in front of a class did affect some of them.

Several students agreed, either because they were shy or socially anxious themselves, or because they saw the benefits of online instruction for those students. Participant #64 stated:

I do not believe my academic achievement was affected using social media as anything done on social media could be done in class with discussions. Although some who may have been too shy to speak up during class might have found it easier to use social media. Participant #64's response revealed a level of empathy not often seen in high school students. This participant realized that while some students may feel discussion can occur in class just as easily, there are students who would prefer discussions online. Some students did discuss the ease of online discussions in their surveys. Participant #28 said, "It's easier to 'type your mind' rather than speaking your mind in front of a class," while Participant #85 stated, "I feel like the inclusion of social media encouraged me to interact with people." Participant #39 noted that "I found it easy to talk." Some students seemed to appreciate the ability to free themselves from speaking in front of the class. This freedom gave students that typically did not participate in class the opportunity to be heard, which can be vital in the learning process. As the students shared their thoughts, they could interact with others and enter into discourse about their thoughts on the assignment.

Another important aspect of this subtheme was that students mentioned that they did not feel they were being interrupted or judged when discussing their points of view. Participant #61 stated, "It was easier to put my own ideas out without being interrupted," while Participant #94 said, "This allowed us to all answer questions without feeling too judged on our responses." These were two of the main reasons Darlene enjoyed the discussion board for her students. She stated that on a discussion board, "You don't have to worry about being interrupted, or judged..." As a teacher, she has seen how those students who are introverted or have social anxiety can get lost in class discussion and understands how a discussion board can give those

quiet students a voice to speak to her class. Participant #85 summed up the subtheme succinctly by stating:

Social anxiety, at times, can cripple a student's ability to learn. The inclusion of social media could help them learn and ask questions. A lot of websites that are run by teachers promise anonymity and encourage students to ask questions.

Students expressed their thoughts online on the discussion board in a way they may have never experienced. They could do so without feeling judged by students staring at them. In addition, it allowed them the opportunity to gather their thoughts and expressing their opinions without being interrupted.

The researcher felt that the opportunity for students who were socially awkward or shy to participate in the online discussion board was one of the most important aspects of this study. As an introverted individual, Darlene recognized that this way of learning provided those introverted students the ability to be as open and forthcoming in discussions as those students who were comfortable speaking out in the classroom. The platform gave all of her students the time and opportunity to discuss the subject, which could have led to a deeper understanding that some students might not have gained otherwise. Even students who had no problem speaking in front of others in class recognized how vital the chance would be for those who suffer from social anxiety or shyness.

Subtheme #3: Negatives for using social media in the classroom. While the first two subthemes addressed positive overarching codes, there were negatives about social media use in the classroom mentioned on the students' surveys. According to their surveys, not every student enjoyed using social media in their English class for assorted reasons. Some students had issues when their Internet or wi-fi connection was slow, rendering Turnitin.com difficult to access.

Some of the students preferred writing their assignments and handing them to Darlene, so they knew she received the assignments without question. Students recognized that social media could be a distraction to some. As some of the students had only used social media for entertainment, they did not always recognize the educational value of social media. Finally, some students discussed the issue of bullying online. The issues that students discussed would suggest that using social media in the classroom could be a negative experience, at least for some of the students. The researcher included these negative aspects in the study, as educators should explore them if they are considering the integration of social media into their classrooms. The possible detriments of using social media are just as noteworthy as the potential benefits.

Problems when wi-fi or Internet was slow or down. One major problem noted with using social media in the English classroom was when students had difficulty with their wi-fi or Internet. Darlene specifically stated that when she assigned the webquest to the students, she “...had to take them to the computer lab pretty much because their computer access is spotty.” She recognized that not all students always had a solid Internet connection to complete the assignments. Several students agreed with her on this topic. Participant #96 stated, “Some people don’t have access to things such as the internet and social media and such.” Participant #12 noted that “Internet is not always reliable...” while Participant #32 stated, “If we don’t have internet at the moment or transportation you might not be able to turn it [assignments] in on time.” Although Darlene confirmed the school had a computer lab, it was open during school hours only. For the high school student who does not have computer or Internet access, using social media could be a very difficult endeavor.

Preferring to turn in handwritten assignments. Some students just did not care for turning in their assignments online. Participant #77 stated, “I do not like having to type my ideas

instead of writing them,” while Participant #110 said, “I like to hand in hard copies in person.” Participant #79 stated, “...I prefer pen and paper because it is more hands-on.” While the students did not specifically say why they preferred handwriting their assignments, Darlene’s interview may have provided the answer as to why. She stated, “I know that some of them don’t like to type because they’re not proficient typers.” As not every student discussed whether they preferred handwriting their assignments to typing them on the computer, there was no way to compare the two. However, it was evident that there were disagreements among the students regarding the preparation and submission of assignments.

While the students above stated they preferred to turn in written assignments, they do not realize the skill they were learning when completing work online. Many college professors do not allow students to turn in written assignments. The vital skill that Darlene’s students learned should assist them when they enter college. Educators on the college level (community college and university) will often require assignments, papers, and various other projects to be typed and submitted via computer instead of handwritten and turned in to the teacher. In introducing her classes to social media, Darlene provided the students the opportunity to learn a vital skill that will become necessary later in their educational career. Most of her students did not appear to recognize that they were learning these skills or that they would be useful later. However, Participant #80 stated, “I feel like it was a great way to get us ready for college, since they use social media often.” While Participant #80 did not fully articulate the skills learned in using social media, the student was aware that college students use social media in college. Social media integration in the classroom provided the chance to experience what would be expected in college.

Social media as a distraction. Preferring to handwrite assignments was not the only negative reason a student noted about social media integration into the classroom. Participant #72 stated, “It could cause other people to get distracted and do other things they aren’t supposed to do.” Participant #25 had similar thoughts: “I believe the use of social media in general is a bad distraction and that we need to discipline ourselves away from the media.” When asked if social media affected self-efficacy, Participant #67 stated, “No, social media is a DISTRACTION. I can accomplish anything.” Participant #23 appreciated that it affected students differently: “I feel like it helped the students become comfortable but it was a distraction to some.” This same student stated later in the survey: “...it could hinder some students with no self discipline from getting their work done.” Some of the students were aware that social media could distract them from doing their assignments. This distraction could cause a student’s grades to suffer. Many high school students already have after-school activities and part-time jobs with which to contend. If students were online during the short amount of free time available and working on homework, but became distracted by other aspects of social media—such as talking to their friends or undertaking frivolous searches online—the student might not complete their assignments on time. Missing deadlines could cause grades to suffer. Self-discipline is an important trait for students to have when going online to complete homework assignments.

Inability to see social media as an effective tool. Some of the students did not enjoy using social media in the classroom because it was for schoolwork and not for fun. Either they could only imagine social media being used as an enjoyable time online, or they just preferred not to mix what they believe was fun with what was not fun. The exact reason was not evident in the surveys. However, the data did show several students did not appreciate the blending of

the two. When asked if using social media in the classroom appealed to the students, several replied in the negative. Participant #10 stated, “No, there’s no need for class social media, b/c everyone already has regular social media.” Participant #27 said, “No, not really b/c it’s still work,” while Participant #71 stated, “No because I don’t like using it for school related activities.” Participant #76 agreed: “I just think social media is for recreational purposes and not work.” It appeared that another student no longer felt the novelty of using social media. According to Participant #55, “...because we use social media so often that using it in class isn’t that exciting.” Either because of lack of experience or because of their educational immaturity, some students were unable to imagine using social media for anything other than recreational purposes.

Bullying online. Finally, one important aspect of social media use that two students discussed was bullying. Participant #89 said, “People need to realize that not everyone on social media will be nice and those that are mean should waste their time with something else.” Participant #105 stated, “Some people think they can say anything even if it’s hurtful.” Unfortunately, bullying online has been a common occurrence when using social media. Too often, individuals have turned on the news to hear another tragic story of a teenager who has committed suicide due to online bullying. Students #89 and #105 were aware of the dangers that could occur when introducing social media into the classroom.

Theme #2: Gaining Real-World Experience through Technology

One aspect of social media use that often occurred throughout the data, with both the surveys of the students and the interview with Darlene, was the idea of gaining real-world experience. Granted, some of the students referred to college instead of the real world, but this can be used interchangeably in this study. In using social media in the classroom, the students

were learning real-world skills that could apply to their college years just as easily as it could their professional life during and beyond college. Moreover, social media provided the students the experience to find information outside of themselves, either with other groups of people or in databases. This skill is imperative in the professional world. Table 4.3 provides the subthemes and further overarching codes within Theme #2.

Table 4.3

Subthemes and Overarching Codes

Subtheme	Overarching Code
Real-world experience	Academic independence Professional dialogue
Knowing where to find information	Groups of people Databases

Subtheme #1: Real-World Experience. The participants for this study were 11th-grade high school students. Some of them likely had jobs and may have interacted with others on a semi-professional level outside of the academic arena. However, it was unlikely that they had experience in the daily life of an adult. The survey given to the students did not inquire about their outside professional experience in a real-world situation. The researcher did not ask these questions because there was little evidence found in the literature review that discussed college students gaining real-world experience from their school assignments on social media. The students of two studies the researcher reviewed noted that they understood how business worked because of lessons learned from social media use in their class (Crăciun & Bunoiiu, 2015; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). However, this was not the main result of either study. The researcher, therefore, did not expect to have Darlene or the students discuss skills that the students could apply to real-world experiences. The researcher only fully realized the real-world aspect of social media use in the English classroom through data analysis.

Two overarching topics that made themselves known within the data analysis were academic independence and professional dialogue. In moving the classroom discussion to Turnitin.com, Darlene provided the students the ability to gain academic independence, as well as learn how to interact professionally online with other individuals. As mentioned above, the researcher did not expect these codes to emerge from the data but soon recognized how important these skills would be for students as they entered college and the professional world. Students in college are often left on their own and require academic independence, as professors are often not as available for assistance as are high school teachers. Additionally, the ability to communicate professionally online is vital, both in college and in professional settings. Students can benefit from learning these skills before entering college.

Academic independence. Within this study, Darlene had a personal goal of providing her students with an opportunity to build their academic independence. The researcher did not request, nor require Darlene to provide this opportunity to her students. As an educator for over a decade, Darlene was aware that this independence is imperative for teenagers to gain, especially before beginning college. When she spoke about the discussion boards, she discussed how she did not interfere with their conversations online. She gave them directions and let them deliberate the questions how they saw fit. She stated:

I just let it [the discussion] go. And it was really neat to see them take it and sort of run with it to a certain extent without any intervention from me. And I really like the independence that it gives them. Because that's something that we see young people today are really struggling with. You've got a lot of kids that are going to college, and they don't have a lot of independence. Academic independence, as they need to make the transition from high school to college.

Darlene further noted:

I think it made them feel sort of grown up and independent. ‘And I’m doing something that grown-ups do.’ Like I think that they have the impression that when you’re out in the real world that you don’t just use social media for friends, you use it for business or for education...

Finally, after member check and upon further reflection, Darlene found:

In retrospect, this strikes me as one of the most significant benefits of online discussion.

It provides physical, emotional, and intellectual distance from me. If we are in the classroom, they will look to me for guidance or intervention. When they are online together outside school hours, they don’t want to “bother” me. It really encourages independence and problem-solving. It places the responsibility for learning on them.

According to the students, some of them appeared to experience some variation of academic independence. They realized that this experience was similar to how some college professors would teach classes. Participant #12 stated, “Even now I still struggle with turnitin. I gained nothing but a better feel for how college will be.” While Participant #12 may not have realized the importance of this experience, this student may be better equipped to handle the situations that can arise when using various online tools in college. Participant #80 stated, “I feel like it was a great way to get us ready for college, since they use social media often.” Participant #87 said, “I think it [academic achievement] was affected in a good way because it makes turning things in easier and it helps you prepare for how college will be like.” Participant #68 enjoyed using social media because it “felt more trusted and fun.” Some of the students appeared to have experienced the independence and appreciated it for what it provided them.

Professional dialogue. One topic that Darlene discussed with the researcher was professional dialogue. Darlene noted that when the students were answering questions on the discussion board, "...there's no rambling. They get to their point; they get in and out, there are no fillers, no uh's and um's, or unclear pronoun references. They call characters by their names. They are more precise, more concise..." However, she stated that during the discussions, there were times when flaws began to show in some of the students' writing. Darlene stated "...when I was reading their responses online, you know, the quality was there, the thought was there, but they were backsliding on their punctuation and their capitalization and separation of ideas." She was not sure if this was their typical online typing or if the emotions of being in an argument was the impetus. She further stated that "my one class where they really get into their arguments, man, punctuation [just went] all out the window. And I think it might have been because they were really focused on the argument."

Conversely, some students noticed a positive difference in their vocabulary and grammar while using social media. Participant #8 stated, "I feel like my English knowledge [*sic*] and grammar has grown over this year." Participant #48 felt that "it would help in the ways of composing your words on twitter or other platforms." Participant #55 indicated that "the benefits are learning how to pronounce words." Participant #111, who was in Darlene's non-social media class, has felt the impact social media has on professional dialogue. "I've experienced that Tumblr can make your vocabulary much more intellectual. Especially in poetry." In interacting with others online, some of the students felt their use of language was expanded and refined.

Subtheme #2: Knowing where to find information. One aspect that has arisen with social media and the Internet is the ability to store knowledge apart from the individual, such as

with a group of people or in a database. In this study, both Darlene and the students acknowledge how social media use gave them the ability to locate information about their respective projects, whether it was professional development or homework. Both Darlene and the students discussed these attributes.

Groups of people. When asked about her personal social media use, Darlene discussed a Facebook group she recently joined for secondary English teachers. Joining this group was not something mandated by a graduate class or her school district. Membership was a personal choice she made to connect with other high school teachers to expand her professional horizons and learn from others. "...it has been awesome. They are very supportive, very positive; they're always offering suggestions and tips and things." Darlene has reached out to this network of individuals who share the common denominator of being a high school English teacher and has gained and shared tips and suggestions to teach students more effectively.

Databases. Social media—and the Internet in general—afford a wide variety of databases from which students and teachers can obtain information. Darlene assigned her social media students a set of questions online about Mark Twain and his life. To answer the questions, the students had to go to the Literary Reference Center Database where "...they looked up articles that were not criticisms, it was an interpretation of his work that were biographical articles. They were about how his life influenced his works in some ways." The students were networked to a database to find the answers that expanded their knowledge about Mark Twain and his works.

While the students did not specifically mention this assignment, several of them did note that the Internet was important for finding information. Participant #8 felt social media "...made things quicker and easier to find information." Participant #22 said, "Yes, I believed I couldn't

do research, but once I knew the information to look for it came easier,” while Participant #84 stated, “Yes [self-efficacy was enhanced] because you have more sources to use on social media.” Participant #8 spent time on the Internet “...for homework/projects/papers to get them done and find information.” Participant #116 stated that “I don’t do that [spend time on social media] unless I’m looking up something that I have to know when I can’t find the answer.” The use of social media networked students to databases that provided knowledge otherwise not known.

Theme #3: Learning through Discourse and Diverse Opinions

In Social Constructivism, the central idea is that individuals learn as they engage in discourse with others. In their discussions, they begin to create meaning about the world around them. In turn, this allows the individual to gain new knowledge (Churcher et al., 2014; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). Within Connectivism, one of the central ideas is that individuals not only learn when they are sharing their thoughts, but they also learn when experiencing a diversity of opinions. They share their opinions, as well as read others’ opinions, which allows individuals to evaluate their beliefs and determine if they wish to change any part of their view (Siemens, 2005; Thota, 2015). Within this study, the students experienced a great deal of both subthemes when interacting with each other on the discussion board. Both the literature reviewed and the data provided by Darlene and her students suggested that the students learned when the educator provided information to them. They also learned in discussions among themselves. The students shared their thoughts and assisted students who had questions or needed help. Additionally, when the students encountered differing opinions, some of them appeared to reevaluate their own opinions to determine if they felt the same way or wanted to revise their views.

Subtheme #1: Reflecting and learning through discourse and sharing thoughts.

One survey question asked the students how they felt their academic achievement was affected by using social media in their English classroom. Several students answered by mentioning the discussion board that sharing their thoughts helped them learn. Participant #77 stated, “This assignment bettered me academically by allowing me to share my thoughts.” Participant #92 explained, “It helped with academic achievement because discussing the book with peers made it easier to understand.” The students also discussed this concept of sharing their thoughts when asked how student engagement was affected. Participant #82 stated, “Being able to reply to someone and elaborate off of their response was beneficial to my student engagement...” while Participant #87 felt “...like I helped other students understand questions better by replying to their answers.” Finally, Participant #70 said, “It helped students discuss by giving feedback to each other.” The students recognized they were learning when interacting with other students and sharing their opinions.

Darlene agreed that the discourse that arose from her questions greatly benefited her students. She felt that “when it came to the final essay, which was the summative assessment for the unit on *Huckleberry Finn*... My other classes definitely seemed more engaged in it, than the class that did not participate in the discussion.” She further stated:

In my mind, the way I see it is this. They spent more time talking about this book [*Huckleberry Finn*] with each other than they did anything else that we read all year long. And that alone has got to be beneficial.

She also noted one question in particular – *How do you think Huck’s relationship with his father Pap influences his relationship with other adults?* – inspired quite a bit of interesting and varied

discussion she enjoyed reading. She could view the learning process as the students discussed the book.

Subtheme #2: Understanding and agreeing/disagreeing with others' opinions.

Several of the students discussed how they enjoyed reading other people's views on the books they were reading. Participant #26 stated, "It is easy to be able to look at your peer's opinion in an open way." Participant #34 felt "...like it helped me understand things better by using the discussion board to read other students' perspectives and ideas." Participant #70 agreed, "It helped me understand more of other people's opinion and feedback." Participant #56 noted that "... [I] enjoyed being able to comment on the opinions of classmates and gaining a better understanding of the topics through people's views." This student understood that not only was reading other opinions critical but commenting on them also expanded learning. Participant #59 stated, "It was enjoyable to be able to use the opinions of other students to further my opinions." Finally, Participant #78 said, "It made it easier to elaborate on someone else's opinion and tell why or why not I agree with them." Being able to read and digest the views of others gave the students the opportunity to compare what they believed to what other students believed. This critical thinking skill of comparison allowed the students to reflect upon their own opinion. They could then determine if and how this new opinion would fit into their own. Students could decide if they wanted to revise their opinion completely because of another students' assessment of the assignment or if they wanted to integrate the opinion into their own.

A discussion of a diversity of views was the result Darlene wanted when she created the discussion board. According to her, the only directions she gave them to the assignment was to "answer the question with evidence and interpretation, you know, and then respond to your classmates and say, 'I agree' or 'I disagree because.'" The limited directions she gave

encouraged the students to evaluate and discuss their classmates' opinions. Participant #78 fully realized the importance of this when asked if social media affected the student's self-efficacy: "Yes, I believe it did; I could respond and discuss why I disagree or agree with someone's opinion better; it helped me believe I can write argumentative essays." When using the discussion boards, the students were sharpening their critical thinking skills. They were learning how to discuss why they agreed or disagreed, as well as requesting the original poster to explain their positions further. The students had the ability to expand upon the posts and explore their own opinions in the process.

Theme #4: Communication and Connection

The next theme that emerged from the data analysis was Communication and Connection. By the very nature of social media, using it in the classroom gave Darlene's students a unique way to communicate and connect with each other. Several of the students were aware of and acknowledged the importance of both communicating and connecting with the students in their classroom and discussed it in their surveys. These students discussed communication among each other within the classroom, as well as the connection to others that social media afforded.

Subtheme #1: Communication among peers. As most of the students were already using social media outside of the classroom, they were aware of the ability to communicate with other individuals. When asked why they used various social media platforms recreationally, overwhelmingly the students said it was to keep in touch with family and friends. Participant #3 stated, "[I use] Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Schoology to interact with friends." Participant #19 uses "...social media as away [*sic*] to interact with friends." Participant #29 said that social

media "...helps me keep up with friends I don't see too often." Not all students mentioned the communication aspect, but many of them did.

Their ability to communicate with others was evident when they answered questions about using social media in the classroom, as well. When asked what they found easy or enjoyable about using social media in the English class, Participant #4 stated, "I found the communication between classmates to be enjoyable." Participant #20's answer was simple and concise: "Communicating with other students." Participant #30 felt that "It improves communication." Social media gave the students another avenue through which to communicate with each other, and this appealed to several of them. Participant #58 expressed one of the advantages of being able to communicate with other students online. "You can talk to other classmates in your same class and ask questions and help each other out." Participant #92 felt the communication with peers online was important because "It helped to avoid arguing that was extremely intense but still allowed us to discuss the novel." As classroom discussion could become heated, using the boards provided the students with a less aggressive way to debate the subject.

When Darlene set up the discussion board for the students, she did it in such a way that the students could interact only with each other in their respective classes. She could read the discussion but did not interact with the students on the discussion board.

I could have intervened; I could have set myself up as a moderator for the discussion. But I didn't need to for the most part. The only thing I would have done if I intervened was to say, "Can you elaborate on this?"

She wanted the students to have that freedom to communicate with each other and discuss the subject matter without her having to police them and their discourse. She felt that it did make a

difference in that they could “...interact freely, without feeling like there is a Big Brother watching you, waiting to, you know, correct you.” Participant #9 enjoyed this and felt that “Social media affected academic achievement in insurmountable ways. We were able to have class discussions online.” As the students were already familiar with using social media as a communication tool, many of them saw the benefits of communicating with their fellow students online.

Subtheme #2: Connection to others on social media. One of the aspects of this study’s theoretical framework was a connection to others. Whereas communication was how the two (or more) parties interacted and had discourse with others, connection was the actual linking of the parties together. When asked about their recreational use of social media, the students cited connection in various answers. Participant #52 stated, “I use these [social media sites] to connect with people and to see what is going on.” Participant #117 noted that “Yes, I use social media outside the classroom for social and communication situations, update on current events, or just to browse for informative purposes.” Social media gave individuals the ability to connect to the outside world to obtain information. Some of the information was from friends and family, while some of the information appeared to be the news of current events. Participant #13 applied that outside world knowledge to the classroom: “It has affected me greatly because I have been able to keep up with local news and what goes on out of my reach and applied it to my work in class.” While the students did not always express in so many words how they used their connections on social media, Darlene did. “I use Twitter to follow writers that I like, and other kinds of creators, just to keep up with their new projects or new books and things that they have coming out.” Her connection to creators provides information that she may not otherwise know.

The students were aware that social media gave them another avenue to reach out to other students or their teachers if necessary. Participant #26 noted, “It allowed us to connect to other students on a level we are familiar with.” While the student cited the familiarity of social media that the researcher addressed in another theme, Participant #26 recognized that the platform allowed a connection to other students. Participant #28 felt that social media made it “...easier to connect with the teacher and your classmates.” Participant #72 further elaborated: “I love it [social media in the classroom], it is a great way for teachers to connect with their students and makes the learning experience more enjoyable.” The students seemed to realize that social media afforded them a secondary way to connect with teachers and other students that could be vital if students needed assistance outside of the traditional classroom period.

Theme #5: Creating Interest

Many students stated they used social media in their daily lives. They are aware of the benefits of using social media. Many of them suggested they use social media for entertainment purposes. Several students translated this entertainment factor of social media into the classroom use. The students comprehended how social media could benefit them in the learning process, and how much they could gain from using social media in the classroom. Additionally, several students just enjoyed using social media, which could translate into a strong attraction for students in completing their assignments.

Subtheme #1: Social media as a source of effective learning. Several students realized the potential of using social media in the classroom and how it benefited their learning. Participant #13 stated, “I find it [social media use in the English class] enjoyable because usually when I see interesting things on social media it sparks my imagination which I can apply to my writing in class.” Participant #15 further stated, “It’s a new way to learn certain info and creates

a new environment.” Participant #31 felt that social media was a “faster and more effective way to learn information.” Participant #21 stated, “I experienced a more involving form of learning.” While there was no description as to what this more involved form of learning was, the student did acknowledge that social media helped with learning.

Darlene discussed social media as a source of effective learning in detail during her interview. In the assignment about Mark Twain and his life, she required them to answer twelve questions on Turnitin.com using the Literary Reference Center Database. In her non-social media class, Darlene held a lecture and shared relevant information about Twain’s life with the students. However, in this assignment for the social media class, they were to find the information themselves. She instructed them to paraphrase information and cite it parenthetically as one does with MLA style. Darlene made sure the students were aware of how to find the article name, the author name, and other relevant information needed when citing an article. As the interview progressed, Darlene stated:

As far as research, online research skills, computer skills, working in a paperless world. I think they feel more confident about that, but I don’t know if they know they need those skills. But I think for that end, it wasn’t the thing I thought I was teaching them. I was focused more on the actual research. I wasn’t thinking about putting it online, what it was forcing them to do so much. Because for me research is research. I see the skills, you know, the thinking and the writing skills that are involved. And so. It was one of those – and this hasn’t happened to me too much in my career, where I think I’m teaching one thing and I’m actually teaching something else, in addition to this.

The online assignment taught students additional research and computer skills that her non-social media students did not have the opportunity to learn.

Subtheme #2: Social media was enjoyable to use. As mentioned previously, most of the students used social media recreationally. Participant #4 used "...Facebook to keep up with family and for games..." Participant #17 used "Instagram and Snapchat because I'm bored most times," while Participant #18 used "...Snapchat because it is fun to see what people are doing." This entertainment value transferred to using social media in the classroom as well. When asked if social media use in the classroom appealed to the student, Participant #39 stated, "Yes, because I enjoyed it." Participant #63 said, "Sure if they are a fun activity to do with the work." Participant #67 noted, "Yes, it'll be more fun & easier. More efficient way," while Participant #68 stated, "It does because I enjoy it." Not all the students wanted to use social media in the classroom, but several of those who did want to use it stated that social media was fun or entertaining and this entertainment value appealed to them.

Darlene knew that the students used social media outside of the classroom and wanted to be a part of this study because of that. She stated, "I am a firm believer that I should do whatever I need to do to keep my kids interested or engaged." With the knowledge that students enjoy using social media recreationally, she knew there was a chance that social media use in the English classroom would appeal to at least some of the students. When she provided a familiar avenue for the students to complete assignments, several of them thought it was a fun exercise. As mentioned previously, not all the students appreciated social media use in the classroom because they felt social media should only be for entertainment purposes. However, while this was the case with some students, Darlene still felt that this study was a successful first run. "I think it was more positive than negative. I don't really see a lot of negatives in it," she stated. Darlene felt that she would use social media in the classroom again, with some changes, such as beginning earlier in the year. As of this first experience for Darlene, she felt the benefits were

enough that incorporating social media into the classroom was an opportunity she would continue to provide to her students.

Conclusion

Overall, integrating social media into the classroom appeared to have a successful first run. There were aspects that Darlene suggested she would change upon using it again, but she felt that there were plenty of benefits. Additionally, many students appeared to appreciate social media use in their English class. They experienced social media as an educational tool, determining that it was both easy to access and use. Students who were shy or did not like to speak in front of the class felt it was simpler to have their discussions online. They could discuss their thoughts that might not have happened otherwise. The discussion board gave the students the freedom to have their voices heard, uninterrupted, in class. While the students discussed negative aspects about using Turnitin.com in the classroom, they were aware of other positive attributes. Using social media helped many of them gain real-world experience as some developed academic independence and learned how to participate in professional dialogue with others. The students reflected and learned through discussion, as well as understood and agreed or disagreed with their fellow students' opinions. Social media gave the students another way in which to communicate with their peers and connect with other individuals. This aspect was important for those who may have had questions or issues during non-class hours. They were also free to interact with more than one student at a time, which could have led to a better connection with those they see every day in class. Finally, using social media created interest with the students. They saw social media as a source of effective learning as well as just enjoyed using the web tool in the classroom. Enjoying the use of social media in class is imperative, as students who enjoy a task will often be more engaged, and research has shown that student

engagement can promote academic achievement (Junco et al., 2011; Ricoy & Feliz, 2016). It is possible that integrating social media into the classroom can increase both academic achievement and student engagement.

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the perspectives of both the teacher and her students in a high school English class when integrating social media. This chapter presented data gathered in both surveys provided to the students and an interview with the teacher. The data went through several coding processes, including *in vivo* coding and a further reduction of coding to determine common themes. The five resulting themes were social media as an educational tool, gaining real-world experience through technology, learning through discourse and diverse opinions, communication and connection, and creating interest. These themes created a framework that explains the teacher and her students' perceptions of using social media in the high school English class. The concluding chapter of this study will provide a discussion of the findings, as well as implications for further study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This qualitative collective case study explored the perceptions and experiences of a teacher and her students in an 11th-grade English class in a northwest Louisiana high school when introducing social media into the classroom as an educational tool. In this study, the collective case study was the appropriate qualitative approach to use. A collective case study is a study that explores one overarching topic and more than one case (Creswell, 2013). Within this study, the overarching topic was social media use in an 11th-grade English class. The cases within this study were the four classes into which Darlene integrated social media, and the one class into which she did not integrate social media.

The literature reviewed on social media integration into the classroom explored two-year (Davis et al., 2015) and four-year colleges (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Alon & Herath, 2014; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Evans, 2014; Fang et al., 2014; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Mandviwalla et al., 2013; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Munoz et al., 2014; Zgheib, 2014), as well as distance learning classes (Gupta et al., 2013; Munoz et al., 2014; Poellhuber et al., 2011). There were two sources reviewed that studied social media in the high school classroom (Bartow, 2014; Casey & Wells, 2015). The literature also described how social media use affected academic achievement (Davis et al., 2015; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Gupta et al., 2013; Junco et al., 2011; Leyrer-Jackson & Wilson, 2017; Munoz et al., 2014) and student engagement (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Buzzetto-More, 2014; Chen et al., 2010; Evans, 2014; Junco et al., 2011; Kivunja, 2015; Rankin, 2009; Ricoy & Feliz, 2016).

Missing from the literature was information on social media use in the high school classroom. While there were studies that focused on the high school level, these studies

investigated the effects of high school use of social media on college performance. Neither study examined the high school classroom in terms of the students and their experiences and perceptions. Even more noteworthy was the lack of study on social media effects on any one subject in high school. Therefore, this study sought to fill an important gap in the literature by exploring those experiences and perceptions of the 11th-grade English class. This study focused on one specific teacher in a mid-sized high school in a northwest parish of Louisiana and her five 11th-grade English classes.

The findings of this study supported current literature, indicating that some of the high school students felt academic achievement and student engagement were affected using social media in the classroom. Academic achievement was affected by learning through discourse and sharing thoughts as well as learning when understanding and agreeing or disagreeing with others' opinions. These were two components of Connectivism (Siemens, 2005; Evans, 2014; Thota, 2015), one of the learning theories upon which the researcher built the theoretical framework. Student engagement was affected by the communication between the students. They reported on their surveys how they enjoyed communicating with others when using social media. Communication with others in the field of learning is a component of Social Constructivism (Churcher et al., 2014; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Powell & Kalina, 2009), the other learning theory upon which the researcher built the theoretical framework of this study. Other themes in this study became apparent as the researcher analyzed the data. These themes included gaining real-world experience through technology and creating interest in using social media in the classroom.

This chapter presents both Darlene's and her students' perceptions and experiences of social media integration in the 11th-grade English classroom. The researcher determined five

themes from the data analysis, which were (1) Social Media as an Educational Tool; (2) Gaining Real-World Experience through Technology; (3) Learning through Discourse and Diverse Opinions; (4) Communication and Connection; and (5) Creating Interest. The researcher derived these themes from the following research questions:

- How do students experience the use of social media in a high school English class?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' academic achievement, as experienced by the students?
- What influence does social media use in education have on students' engagement, as experienced by the students?
- How does an 11th grade English teacher experience the use of social media in her class?

This chapter will discuss the interpretations of the findings from this study, followed by a discussion of implications of the findings. Chapter 5 will conclude with recommendations for actions as well as suggestions for future study of social media use on the high school level.

Interpretation of Findings

As mentioned previously, this study sought to understand the perceptions and experiences of an 11th-grade English teacher and her students when integrating social media into the classroom as an additional learning tool. The teacher, Darlene, was interviewed by the researcher. Darlene distributed anonymous surveys created by the researcher during her class periods. The completed surveys were given to the researcher. Darlene retained ownership of the surveys until she gave them to the researcher. The researcher did not meet with or interview any of the students. Therefore, the interpretations of the students' findings are based solely on how well she understood the students' answers to the survey questions. The researcher took care to omit any answers or quotes from the students that she could easily misinterpret, as she was

unable to contact the students for follow-up interviews. This action was to prevent unethical reporting. According to Creswell (2012), a researcher must not "...attribute quotes to individuals that are not accurate" (p. 279). The researcher did not report any ambiguous or vague answers.

The findings that emerged from the data analysis were that social media contributed to: (1) Creating Student Engagement and Community, (2) Creating Conversation and Online Learning, and (3) Creating a Pathway to Higher Education/Job Demands. The data analysis, based on responses from the participants, were presented in Chapter 4. As there is little in the literature concerning the high school student's experiences when using social media in the classroom, it is the researcher's hope that the following interpretations can add students' voices to the discourse of social media use in education.

Finding #1: Creating Student Engagement and Community

As the very nature of social media connects individuals online, giving them the opportunity to interact, share ideas, and develop groups based on similarities (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015), it is not surprising that one of the findings of this study was that social media contributed to: "Creating Student Engagement and Community." As a reminder, student engagement is the time and effort a student invests into educational activities that will assist in obtaining desired outcomes (Junco et al., 2011). Social media focuses on engagement with others, as well as creating a community of individuals. When Darlene introduced social media into the classroom for this study, she created an educational community wherein the students would participate and learn from each other. This finding has four components: (1) communication with peers, (2) easy for shy/anxious students to use, (3) social media can be enjoyable to use, and (4) disadvantages to using social media in the classroom.

Communication with peers. As a learning theory rooted in the idea of individuals engaging in social interaction, Social Constructivism focuses on communication with others as a central aspect of how these individuals learn. When people interact and enter into discourse, they begin creating meaning about the world around them (Churcher et al., 2014). The very act of communicating with others is what creates learning if one subscribes to Social Constructivism as a learning theory. Individuals may communicate with family and friends recreationally, or with other students and teachers in the educational arena. Darlene assigned questions to be answered on the discussion board because she wanted the students to communicate with one another. This assignment gave them the opportunity to enter into discourse and to ask questions about something they may not have understood. The students were also able to agree with or disagree with the other students and discuss why. By the very nature of this assignment, the students communicated with each other online and in a different environment from the classroom. Several students in this study noted that online student communication was one reason why they enjoyed using social media in the English classroom.

Easier for shy/socially anxious students to use. As communication with others involves at least one or more people in discourse, there are often distinct levels in which people tend to interact. Some individuals are extremely outgoing, while others are timid. It is often that the shy or socially anxious students do not speak in class, either because they are too nervous to speak or unable to talk over the more boisterous students. However, the data suggests that the community created by introducing social media into the classroom can benefit shy or socially anxious students. Darlene's students acknowledged that using social media in the classroom could be an advantage to those who had issues speaking in front of the classroom.

The data collected suggested that both Darlene and the students appreciated that the discussion boards were easier for shy or socially anxious students. Darlene, who identifies as an introvert, stated that having social media when she was in high school would have made a difference for her. As a career teacher, she understands that there are students in her class who will not speak because they do not want to be judged or interrupted. While not all students stated that they preferred social media because they did not have to talk in front of the class, some students reported feeling this way. Additionally, some students recognized that this ability to “speak” to the class would be a benefit for shy or socially awkward students.

The literature is also rife with evidence suggesting that social media benefits the shy or socially anxious students. Balakrishnan (2017) found that shy students were more comfortable in discussions online than they were speaking face-to-face. It was easier for the students to respond to the words they read on their computer or phone screens. When Rankin (2009) introduced Twitter into her U. S. History class, she noted that some students who had previously not participated in the classroom did interact with others online. She felt it was because it was easier for the students to type out their thoughts instead of expressing them in front of the class.

Participant #28 came to these conclusions as well when Darlene introduced Turnitin.com into her classroom. This student felt it was easier to “...type your mind...” than it was to speak in front of the class. Participant #85 felt that “...social media encouraged me to interact with people.” Several studies suggested that students enjoyed using social media because they could ask questions online when they were too shy to ask in class (Al-Bahrani & Patel, 2015; Balakrishnan, 2017; Bartow, 2014; Churcher et al., 2014; Harris & Rea, 2009; Khan et al., 2016; Krutka & Carpenter, 2016; Zgheib, 2014).

Social media can be enjoyable to use. As Darlene's students overwhelmingly use social media recreationally, they enjoy using the web tools. Darlene felt her students would enjoy the use, which she hoped would encourage some of them in their assignments. The data showed that several students did approve of social media incorporation into the English classroom because they found it fun to use. This result agrees with other studies the researcher reviewed.

Within the literature review, some studies suggested that the participants enjoyed using social media in the classroom. Students enjoyed using web tools in the classroom and interacting with each other online (Casey & Wells, 2015). In a second study, students reported excitement and interest in the idea of community learning when using Twitter in the classroom (Ricoy & Feliz, 2016). The evidence showed that this excitement in using Twitter as a learning component produced increased academic achievement. Further evidence suggested that any social media web tool could bring excitement into the classroom. Students using Google + (Kivunja, 2015) and YouTube (Alon & Herath, 2014) reported satisfaction because of their use of the social media web tools in their classroom.

Disadvantages to using social media in the classroom. Although this study suggested benefits to using social media in the classroom, there were also disadvantages that the students specified. Some of this study's participants could not fully grasp or understand how social media could be an effective learning tool. Because many of this study's students reported not using social media in the classroom previously, they may not be able to imagine it as anything other than a fun application to pass the time. Students also stated that social media was a distraction, which could hinder students' ability to complete coursework. If students do not focus on completing assignments, then they may find themselves spending their time on social media

talking to non-classmates, reading material not related to school, or posting their thoughts. Both of these disadvantages can occur when teachers use social media in their classrooms.

Inability to see social media as an effective learning tool. As most of Darlene's students used social media outside of the classroom for recreational purposes, they were aware of the entertainment value of the web tools. However, some of the students stated in their surveys that they could not imagine using social media educationally and felt that people should use social media for "fun" only. This inability to see social media as an effective tool was evident in the literature reviewed as well. Merle and Freberg (2016) discovered in their study that ten percent of their participants were unable to imagine how teachers could use social media as an educational tool.

When Darlene's students discussed using web tools in the classroom, the ones that did not want to use social media for educational purposes stated it that was because they did not want to use them for "work." While the students did not explain their reasons for this, the researcher discovered several possible reasons in the literature. Churcher et al. (2014) discussed how there were students in their study who were concerned about blurring the lines between their academic life and their social life. The students did not want the two to mix, which could be one reason why some of Darlene's students did not want to use social media in the classroom.

The age of Darlene's students could also explain why several of them could not imagine social media as an educational tool. In the study conducted by Balakrishnan et al. (2017), the researchers discovered that Malaysian participants used social media for educational purposes while Australian participants used social media for socializing. Their study did not provide a possible explanation for this. However, they did note that 70% of the Australian students were between the ages of 18-20 while only 30% of the Malaysian students were in this age group.

The average age of the Malaysian group was higher than the Australian group. This immaturity may be a part of the reason why some of Darlene's students were unable to appreciate the value of social media beyond entertainment.

Social media as a distraction. Several of Darlene's students stated social media was a distraction. Those students felt that educators should not introduce social media into the classroom because it is distracting. Davis et al. (2015) suggested that while Facebook as an instrumental tool enhanced academic achievement in their study, there was an issue of Facebook distracting students. These researchers determined that grades could suffer if a student chose to spend time socializing online instead of completing their assignments. Darlene's high school students were cognizant enough to know that there are individuals for whom social media is a distraction and that introducing these web tools into the classroom would be disadvantageous to some students.

Finding #2: Creating Conversation and Online Learning

Because social media is online and one of the most important aspects of the web tool is communication, it is predictable that teachers who integrate social media in their classrooms expect their students to experience online learning. The networking of individuals in learning communities is one of the aspects of Siemens' learning theory Connectivism (2005). Individuals are networked to each other in these communities, wherein they learn from each other as they discuss various ideas and opinions. Within this finding, the current study produced several aspects which the participants discussed. These aspects are (1) knowing where to find information, (2) learning through discourse and diverse opinions, (3) social media as a learning tool, (4) easy to access and use, and (5) issues with equipment or the Internet.

Knowing where to find information. Both Darlene and the students realized that when using social media, they were able to find information from other sources, such as groups of people or databases. When Darlene joined the secondary English teacher Facebook group, she found that she could learn from other teachers, as well as share her ideas and tips. When Darlene sent her students to the Literary Reference Center database, she taught the students how they could find needed information by using it and other databases. Finding information from either other people or databases is one of the components of Connectivism (Siemens, 2005; Thota, 2015). Since the advent of technology, such as the Internet and social media, individuals do not have to remember every piece of information learned. Instead, they can refer to their networked groups or databases to revisit and remind themselves of the information needed.

The ability to learn from other sources is imperative when using social media. In a study conducted by Kim (2017), the students mentioned that the most valuable advantage of social media was educators posting links to news articles and other information relevant to the lessons. Often, the students reported that they would not have seen these articles otherwise. Darlene mentioned something similar in her interview. She stated that Twitter provides articles and information that she cannot find in traditional news media, which gives her the ability to make a well-informed decision about the subject she is researching. Individuals having the opportunity to obtain material from other sources can lead to sharper critical thinking skills as they must distinguish between what is true and what is not, as well as integrate these new ideas into their current knowledge.

When individuals are online and know where to find information, they can gain knowledge. Within the data gathered in this study, Darlene and her students discussed how they learned through sharing their opinions with others, as well as reading diverse opinions with

which they agreed or disagreed. These two characteristics are important as they are both related to Social Constructivism and Connectivism, the two learning theories upon which the theoretical framework of this study rests. Social Constructivism is the theory that individuals learn both formally and informally while interacting with others (Churcher et al., 2014). Connectivism is the theory that includes network, chaos, and self-organization theories (Siemens, 2005; Thota, 2015). This theory states that individuals are connected to networks and learn when entering into discourse with others. Individuals then read opinions that are different from theirs, and in the process, if they wish, they can choose to incorporate this new knowledge into their own.

Learning through discourse and diverse opinions. The students appeared to appreciate sharing their thoughts with other students. They felt that in doing so, they were able to learn as well as help others learn. This sharing of thoughts is noteworthy in this study, as both of the learning theories discussed in the literature review suggest that sharing thoughts and ideas with others is one way in which people learn. When Lev Vygotsky postulated Social Constructivism in 1978, the main focus of his theory was that when individuals share ideas with others, it stimulates new ways of understanding (Churcher et al., 2014). Connectivism was born from this. Siemens also believed that sharing ideas with others stimulated learning (2005). However, he felt it was important to address technology and how it could assist in this social learning. Both theories concur that learning occurs when individuals share their thoughts, and discourse occurs. Several of Darlene's students commented on how sharing their thoughts were important in the learning process.

Connectivism moves beyond Social Constructivism in its attempt to explain how individuals learn (Siemens, 2005). One of the components of Connectivism is that individuals learn new information and gather knowledge when confronted with other opinions and

discussions within their digital network (Thota, 2015). Darlene's students expressed this in their surveys. Not only were the students able to review other students' thoughts and ideas, but they were able to use those opinions to determine how they felt about a particular subject. This learning occurred when reading a diversity of others' opinions, as well as deliberating on why they agreed or disagreed with an opinion. As a teacher, Darlene knew that the sharing and debating of opinions would increase her students' knowledge. This was Darlene's impetus for assigning the students questions to answer on the discussion board. Once the students responded to the questions, they were required to reply to another student and discuss why they agreed or disagreed. By the very nature of Darlene's assignment, she was testing the theory of Connectivism.

Social media as a source of effective learning. As evident from the data gathered in this study, social media is a source of effective learning. While some students may not believe they can learn anything from a tool they use for fun, evidence that Darlene and several of her students provided suggests otherwise. One student reported how ideas seen on social media sparked imagination and encouraged the student when writing. Another student felt that social media was an effective and faster way to learn. Darlene noted that social media was an effective learning tool for her students because it helped develop skills that she had not anticipated. In doing their research for the discussion boards, the students were also learning online research skills and computer skills.

The literature review confirmed that social media was a source of effective learning. Alon and Herath (2014) discussed an International Business class that used YouTube as a learning supplement wherein students reported feeling more productive in class. Furthermore, a study by Arpacı (2017) suggested that students felt using social media in class would enhance

effectiveness, productivity, and performance. These students understood how social media could assist them when completing assignments. Additionally, various studies have shown how web tools can enhance students' academic performance (Davis et al., 2015; Ferrara-Love, 2013; Junco et al., 2011). An increase in academic performance suggests that students are retaining the information taught.

Easy to access and use. One reason why the idea of using social media as a learning tool is popular is that social media is easy to access and use. Students and teachers can go online at any time of day to interact with others. They can reply to each other and debate why they agree or disagree with the original poster. Individuals can obtain links to sources that may be unknown to them. Social media enhances learning because it is easy to access and use.

While some of Darlene's students had difficulties with Turnitin.com, several students appreciated its use. The data suggested that the accessibility and portability of Turnitin.com were both noteworthy reasons for students wanting to use them in the classroom. Students could access the social media site outside of the regular classroom period. Additionally, they could access their assignments on their laptops, tablets, or smartphones anywhere they could obtain a connection to the Internet. The need for accessibility and portability was evident in the literature review, as well. Ferrara-Love (2013) stated that students appreciated that they could access their instructors at home at any given time. These students also reported the ability to work from home when it was convenient for them. Wiid, Cant, and Nell (2013) stated that their research showed students valued the ease of use and accessibility of social media in education above all other results discovered.

Familiarity with social media was another point that Darlene's students discussed in their surveys. Most of her students used social media outside of the classroom so they were familiar

with web tools. The literature suggested that this familiarity would benefit the students' academic performance. Arpaci (2017) found that students familiar with social media felt using the tools in education would enhance their performance, effectiveness, and productivity. The students who were familiar with the tools would likely have an easier time completing their assignments than those who have never used the tools. This comfort with and belief that they could use the web tools could lead to increased academic performance.

Issues with equipment or the Internet. While easy access and use is an attractive feature of social media, there are drawbacks. Harris and Rea (2009) discussed that one disadvantage of using social media in the classroom was that students did not always have access to the needed equipment. To complete the assignments in Darlene's classroom, the students needed a computer, a tablet, or a smartphone, as well as access to the Internet. Students not having equipment or access to the Internet creates roadblocks to the benefits of their use. Many campuses do provide a computer lab for those students who do not have access to the necessary equipment. However, these labs are usually not open 24 hours a day, creating difficulties for the students. Darlene stated that her high school does have a computer lab. Unfortunately, this lab is not open beyond school hours, which makes it more difficult for students to complete the assignment. Even if students were to use a city library, they might have time limits on the usage of their computers and restricted hours. The lack of equipment or Internet connection can interfere with students' ability to complete assignments in a social media class.

Finding #3: Creating a Pathway to Higher Education/Job Demands

The literature review did not reveal many instances of students discussing how skills learned while using social media could transfer to the real world. However, both Darlene and her students did mention this outcome in data collected. Both Darlene and the students felt that

there were skills learned in this experiment that would benefit students in both college and the real world. These skills included research skills, computer skills, and professional writing skills. Two aspects of this finding are (1) real-world experience and (2) connection to others on social media.

Real-world experience. One reason Darlene was eager to participate in this study was that she wanted to give her students the opportunity to develop academic independence. So often in her career, she witnessed students who have very little academic independence due to the pedagogy of high school education. She felt that assigning them a discussion board in which she only observed, but did not participate or guide, gave the students the opportunity to use their research skills. Darlene hoped that this type of assignment would build their academic independence and self-esteem.

Darlene discovered that through this experiment, not only did the students gain some academic independence, but they gained other vital skills including online research skills and computer skills. Darlene's students applied these skills when completing assignments on the discussion board. The students learning these secondary skills was an aspect of informal learning that the teacher did not intend (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). The act of informal learning is also a component of Connectivism, one of the theories on which the researcher of this study based the theoretical framework (Siemens, 2005; Thota, 2015). The students informally learned skills within this English class that they can use in both college and the professional world.

Before students graduate from high school and move into the next phase of their lives, whether it is college or into the professional world, they have the opportunity to learn vital skills when using social media in the high school arena. Research has shown that social media use in college provides students with an idea of how the business world works. The students know that

business is becoming more global and that social media can connect them to others (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014). When using social media, the students are connected to people in their network as well as outside of their network, which can foster relationships that can follow students into college and the professional world.

Connection to others on social media. Some students in Darlene's class cited a connection to others as a reason for using social media recreationally as well as educationally. This connection provided the students with an opportunity to follow events happening in real time, either on the news or with their family and friends. The students also appreciated the connection social media afforded them with their teachers and fellow students. The students knew that if they had problems with homework or general questions with assignments, they had a connection to which they could reach for answers, no matter what time of day it was. Darlene also used social media for a connection—she reported using social media to connect to other teachers, teaching experts, authors, and interior designers.

One of the components of Connectivism is a connection to others (Siemens, 2005; Thota, 2015). When he postulated Connectivism, Siemens believed that technology gave individuals a way to connect to each other which was not available previously (2005). This connection provided an opportunity for individuals to learn. The literature reviewed supported this idea of connection. Two studies showed that because of the ability to post at all times of day, students often felt more connected to one another (Harris & Rea, 2009; Zgheib, 2014). Another aspect of connection discussed in the literature review was how social media had expanded the educational world. Evidence suggested that individuals who may not have met otherwise have met on various social media sites and were able to collaborate on numerous educational and research projects. In the past they would have been limited to phone calls or handwritten letters; now they

now have the ability to chat immediately in instant messages, video chat, or email. Additionally, translation tools online have removed the language barrier (Barczyk & Duncan, 2012; Krutka & Carpenter, 2016). Social media has created a virtual world wherein individuals can collaborate without time or language issues.

Much of what Darlene and her high school students stated agrees with the research conducted at the college level. Research suggests that social media integration into education benefits people of all ages, whether they are high school students, college students, or their educators. With the addition of web tools to the classroom, students have reported enjoying the ease of access. They can go online at home or on their phones, which does not limit them to learning in the classroom only. Students can learn at any point in time. Social media also gives shy or anxious students a voice when they may not want to speak in front of others. They can take their time when answering questions, providing a well-thought out answer when they might have stammered and become embarrassed otherwise. Social media provides real-world experience to the students by encouraging their academic independence. The students also learn about other avenues in which they can obtain information, such as from other groups of people or databases.

Students have the opportunity to learn by exposure to differing opinions with others, which can be vital to their critical thinking skills. They can sharpen their ability to discern what is and is not valid when deliberating the subject. Social media connects students and provides them a way to communicate with each other and their teachers. Finally, students are often interested in social media because it is a source of effective learning and it is fun to use. The high school students in this study reported many of the same experiences and perceptions that their college-aged counterparts have reported.

Implications

The purpose of this study was to explore how 11th-grade English students and their teacher perceived and experienced the integration of social media into the classroom as an additional learning tool. The goal of this work was to discover if high school students experienced the same results that their college-aged counterparts did, as well as to document these perceptions and experiences for the literature. As there is a significant gap in the literature concerning high school students and their experiences, it was important to provide research and data to fill this gap.

One issue that could arise with social media use in the classroom is the additional layer of communication it would provide to students and teachers. Kim (2017) discusses how students and teachers can easily cross professional boundaries when they interact online. As high school students are mostly underage, there are policies within the school district dictating when and how teachers can interact with students. Because of the way social media allows individuals to communicate online, the high school teacher must tread carefully when incorporating web tools into the classroom. Although this study shows that social media incorporation can be beneficial to the high school student, before incorporation, the teacher must be aware of district and school regulations, as well as any other challenges that may arise while adding this additional layer of communication to the classroom. It is imperative that teachers have support from their administration. Additionally, educators should discuss any issues that may occur while using social media to address problems that may arise during the school year.

Evidence suggests that many administrators of traditional K-12 schools continue to embrace specific assumptions about students and how they learn (Kruger-Ross & Holcomb, 2012), so educators should revisit the pedagogy of the social media classroom. Most K-12

administrators believe that a curriculum should be standardized, that students learn by standards, that numerical data testing is the best way to assess how the students learn, and that students should all demonstrate their learning ability in the same way. Introducing social media into the classroom as a learning tool can completely replace these ideas. Evidence has shown that social media can provide learning opportunities that are not standardized. Additionally, with the amount of informal learning that can occur within social media, numerical data testing would be inappropriate to measure this learning. Educators should revise the pedagogy as teachers and students will need structure when using these tools. Additionally, revising the pedagogy can give the educator the opportunity to provide critical assessment, which will provide the students with the best education possible.

High school teachers who are social-media savvy must be forward-thinking and have the ability to transform their classrooms from a boring lecture hall to something fun and exciting. However, when a teacher decides to incorporate social media into the classroom, there are many aspects of which the teacher must be aware. If the high school or district administration allows the teacher this incorporation, the teacher must define the boundaries so as not to intentionally or accidentally cross ethical lines with the students. The teacher must also understand that the addition of social media does not necessarily follow the pedagogy of the traditional high school classroom. The teacher should continually reevaluate how the class is taught and make necessary changes when needed and allowed.

Recommendations for Action

If a high school teacher of any subject is interested in incorporating social media into the classroom, the teacher must first determine whether they are allowed to do so. If they are, then they must decide which social media platforms they will use. The researcher suggests that, once

the administration has cleared the use of social media, teachers should revisit their school district's rules on ethics and any specific policies addressing how teachers interact with students. As communication between people can often be misinterpreted, teachers should be consciously aware of how they interact with students to reduce the chance of liability. Interactions between students and teachers can open an educational institution to sanctions or lawsuits, so teachers must be cognizant of how they use social media when communicating with students.

Another recommendation for action is that, once the teacher has decided to incorporate social media into the classroom, the teacher should define both the instructions and goals of the assignments. Evidence has shown that students who are unaware of what is expected of them when using social media in class experience undue anxiety (Churcher et al., 2014; Kivunja, 2015). Because social media changes the teaching style and expectations present in the traditional classroom, the teacher should give clear instructions and examples to the students. While there may still be anxiety for students who have not used social media in the classroom previously, having a good set of instructions and an example of how to complete the work can alleviate some of the students' anxiety. If a teacher can provide clear guidelines, then the class will have less trouble completing assignments, as is true in any learning environment.

If school administrators are interested in providing the opportunity for their teachers to use social media in the classroom, the researcher recommends that they research various types of available web tools. Not all platforms are the same, and some provide features that others do not (e.g., Turnitin.com does not provide notifications of responses). Administrators should confer with colleagues in their school districts to confirm that providing their teachers with the opportunity to incorporate social media in the classroom is a viable option. The school leaders should not participate in any action that would cause undue hardships to the staff, students, or the

district. Finally, if the teachers have the opportunity to use web tools in the classroom, the administration should provide adequate training on the specific web tool to both the teachers and the students so they can use the tools effectively.

One aspect that educators could explore when integrating social media into the classroom is the concept of one-to-one technology. This technology is when the school or school board provides laptops, iPads, or other types of tablets to each of the students (Penuel, 2006) or the students bring their own devices to school to use (Selwyn et al., 2017). While this would provide students with access to the devices if they did not have a laptop or smartphone at home, the administrators should address whether one-to-one technology would be appropriate for their district. Evidence showed that using devices within the classroom did not always stimulate learning (Selwyn et al., 2017). Instead, the students were doing basic school work, such as preparing papers or studying. Additionally, and for some administrators, more importantly, while one-to-one technology may be a benefit to the school, the school board would need to review the cost of supplying either the equipment, the wi-fi connection for the students' devices, or both. The school board would also need to consider the expense of repairing or replacing damaged equipment.

Recommendations for Further Study

As evident by the gap in the literature review, little research has assessed how high school students experience the incorporation of social media as an additional learning tool in their classes. Researchers should continue adding studies to this literature gap to fully understand how high school students perceive and experience the incorporation of social media into the classroom. The filling of this gap can provide evidence as to the benefits and detriments of using social media in the high school as a learning tool. Researchers should study all grade

levels in high school as well as all subject areas. Social media need not be limited to the English class. Researching other subjects may provide a different perspective, depending on what subject it is. Regardless of the subject matter or the grade level, more research should be conducted to corroborate the data presented in this current study.

Conclusion

The world has changed because of technology. Before typewriters, students had to handwrite their papers. Before word processors and computers, the students had to spend time typing on typewriters that would not save their work. Before email and the Internet, students had to physically turn in papers, whether they were handwritten or typed. Now, because of computers and the Internet, a student in Louisiana can obtain a degree from a university in Maine, without ever stepping foot into a classroom or even into the state of Maine. When technology changes the world, education must adapt. If students do not know how to use the devices that are prevalent in the business world, they will graduate without the knowledge to obtain a job. It is vital that students have the opportunity to learn how to use these technological tools during school, so they will be ready to join the workforce after graduation.

There were no new discoveries that resulted from this study that the researcher did not already discuss in the literature review. However, the study did provide a new perspective that was not already evident in the literature review, as there was no qualitative evidence to discuss the high school teacher and her students' experiences and perceptions on social media use in the English classroom. These voices can now be added to the growing body of literature that reports on the integration of social media in education. As this technology has become more widely used in the last decade and teachers are introducing social media into the classroom, researchers are still studying the effects. The results of this study have provided both positive and negative

aspects of the integration of social media into the classroom as experienced by the 11th-grade teacher and her students. This information is vital for educators to consider if they choose to add this technology to their teaching methods.

This study can usher in a new and exciting world for high school teachers and students. Teachers can integrate social media into the classroom in a way that will connect them to the world outside of the four walls of the classroom, providing opportunities that do not currently exist. The boundaries of their knowledge can be expanded to include concepts and ideas that add to the richness of the students' education. Darlene and her high school students confirmed that social media does provide a different type and way of learning. Bold and innovative educators should follow in Darlene's footsteps and work toward integrating social media into their classrooms. Once students become comfortable with using web tools in conjunction with their teachers' lessons, the opportunities for expanding knowledge are endless.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND STUDENT ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH (SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to assent to participation, document your decision.
- You will be provided with information about this study if you assent to participate.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your teacher and English class have been chosen to have social media incorporated into their classwork. All students within the class will be exposed to the incorporation of social media; however, those that will participate in the actual study will be those whose parents have signed the consent form signed and returned to Angela M. Wells.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who provides assent to participate.

What will I be asked to do?

- Social media has been incorporated into your high school English classroom. After a period of six weeks, your parents were provided a consent form to give permission for you to participate in the study. Your parent signed and returned the consent form. You were assigned a random number. These numbers were randomly generated to create focus groups, which will consist of five to nine other students. The purpose of this focus group is to learn about your experiences with social media in the classroom. The students

will be provided the opportunity to describe how social media affected their learning process, whether it is positive or negative. Once the focus groups have been created, the researcher will attempt to have involvement with the students two to three times (once for the focus group meetings and one to two times if the researcher needs follow-up information).

- If you choose not to participate, regardless of your parents providing permission, you will be dismissed from the study.
- You will be invited to review the transcripts and data coding to verify that the researcher has not misunderstood any of your experiences.
- The only intervention that is experimental in this study is the addition of social media use to the English classroom.
- The expected duration of your participation will be two weeks.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). You will only be asked to describe your experiences with social media in the classroom. The teacher's observations of your experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, your parent will be immediately notified to determine whether you and your parent wish to allow you to continue in the study.
- The only discomfort that may arise is that you will be in a focus group with other students and you may feel uncomfortable discussing your experiences in front of other individuals. Your English teacher will also be present. However, every effort will be made to make you feel comfortable.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred to you to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- You will be provided a number to which you will be referred during the duration of the study. While the researcher will know your name, you will never be referred to by name in the study.
- The focus group will meet on campus grounds in a conference room that will provide privacy to the students.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your school may request a copy of the dissertation

once completed; however, there will be no mention of your name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students involved in the focus groups to be aware of your participation. All names will be removed from the formal study, and the students will be identified by a number only.
- The focus groups will be audio recorded with an iPad application (Awesome Voice Recorder Pro) as well as a cassette recorder for back up. The researcher will also take notes as needed. The Principal Investigator is the only individual who will have access to this information. They will be used only for transcription and general observations when discussing the information determined from the study. They will be erased/destroyed three years after the study is completed.
- The focus group interviews will be transcribed, and the information will be coded to aggregate the students' replies as not to single out any one individual.
- The transcripts and coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All of the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the cassette tapes and handwritten notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- A copy of your signed assent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The assent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Members of the focus group will be asked not to repeat what is discussed but the researcher cannot ensure that they will respect other participants' privacy.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, your parent will be contacted for further consent and description of the project.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of New England. Your decision to participate will not affect your standing as students.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty for you. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty you.
- Your parent will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this permission form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I assent to take part in the research and give my permission to participate, and do so voluntarily.

Child's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The child named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND STUDENT ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH (NON-SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to assent to participation, document your decision.
- You will be provided with information about this study if you assent to participate.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your teacher has been chosen to have social media incorporated into two of her classes. While your class was not included in the incorporation of social media, you have experience with social media and can provide vital information to the researcher concerning social media use. Those students that will participate in the actual study will be those whose parents have signed and returned the consent form to Angela M. Wells.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who provides assent to participate.

What will I be asked to do?

- The researcher has spoken to your class concerning her dissertation about the role of social media in education. Your parent signed and returned the consent form. You were assigned a random number. These numbers were randomly generated to create focus groups, which will consist of five to nine other students. The purpose of this focus group is to learn about your experiences with social media. The students will be provided the

opportunity to describe how you feel social media would affect their learning process, whether it is positive or negative. Once the focus groups have been created, the researcher will attempt to be involved with the students two to three times (once for the focus group meetings and one to two times if the researcher needs follow-up information).

- If you choose not to participate, regardless of your parents providing permission, you will be dismissed from the study.
- You will be invited to review the transcripts and data coding to verify that the researcher has not misunderstood any of your experiences.
- You have received no unusual treatment or intervention before these focus groups.
- The expected duration of your participation will be two weeks.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). You will only be asked to describe your experiences with social media. The teacher's observations of your experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, your parent will be immediately notified to determine whether you and your parent wish to allow you to continue in the study.
- The only discomfort that may arise is that you will be in a focus group with other students and you may feel uncomfortable discussing your experiences in front of other individuals. Your English teacher will also be present. However, every effort will be made to make you feel comfortable.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred to you to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- You will be provided a number to which you will be referred during the duration of the study. While the researcher will know your name, you will never be referred to by name in the study.
- The focus group will meet on campus grounds in a conference room that will provide privacy to the students.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students involved in the focus groups to be aware of your participation. All names will be removed from the formal study, and the students will be identified by a number only.
- The focus groups will be audio recorded with an iPad application (Awesome Voice Recorder Pro) as well as a cassette recorder for back up. The researcher will also take notes as needed. The Principal Investigator is the only individual who will have access to this information. They will be used only for transcription and general observations when discussing the information determined from the study. They will be erased/destroyed three years after the study is completed.
- The focus group interviews will be transcribed, and the information will be coded to aggregate the students' replies as not to single out any one individual.
- The transcripts and coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All of the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the cassette tapes and handwritten notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- A copy of your signed assent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The assent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Members of the focus group will be asked not to repeat what is discussed but the researcher cannot ensure that they will respect other participants' privacy.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, your parent will be contacted for further consent and description of the project.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of New England. Your decision to participate will not affect your standing as students.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty for you. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty you.
- Your parent will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this permission form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I assent to take part in the research and give my permission to participate, and do so voluntarily.

Child's signature

Date

Printed name**Researcher's Statement**

The child named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix C

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH (SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to give permission for your child to participate, document your decision.
- Your child will be provided with information about this research if you give permission for your child to participate. If your child does not wish to participate, they will not be included in the study.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you want your child to participate. Your participation and your child's participation are voluntary.
- Please share this information with any other parent or legal guardian with caregiving responsibility for your child.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your child's teacher and English class have been chosen to have social media incorporated into their classwork. All students within the class will be exposed to the incorporation of social media; however, those that will participate in the actual study will be those that have this form signed and returned to Angela M. Wells.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who provides consent to participate.

What will I be asked to do?

- Social media has been incorporated into your child's high school English classroom. After a period of six weeks, this consent form has been sent home to receive permission for your child to participate in the study. From the returned consent forms, the students will be assigned a number to remain anonymous within the study. Their numbers will be randomly generated to create focus groups, which will consist of six to ten students. The researcher will meet with these focus groups after school on school grounds in the presence of the teacher to discuss their experiences. The students will be provided the opportunity to describe how social media affected their learning process, whether it is positive or negative. Once the focus groups have been created, the researcher will attempt to be involved with the students two to three times (once for the focus group meetings and one to two times if the researcher needs follow-up information).
- The students will be asked to sign assent forms before the beginning of the focus group to verify they wish to continue participating. If they choose not to participate, regardless of you providing permission, they will be dismissed from the study.
- The students will be invited to review the transcripts and data coding to verify that the researcher has not misunderstood any of the students' experiences.
- The only intervention that is experimental in this study is the addition of social media use to the English classroom.
- The expected duration of the individual's participation will be two weeks.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). The students will only be asked to describe their experiences. The teacher's observations of the students' experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, you will be immediately notified to determine whether you wish to allow your child to continue in the study.
- The only discomfort that may result is that students will be in a focus group with other students and they may feel uncomfortable discussing their experiences in front of other individuals. Their English teacher will also be present. However, every effort will be made to make the students comfortable.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to your child for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred by you for your child to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- Your child will be provided a number to which he or she will be referred during the duration of the study. While the researcher will know your child's name, he or she will never be referred to by name in the study.
- The focus group will meet on campus grounds in a conference room that will provide privacy to the students.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your child's school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your child's name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students involved in the focus groups to be aware of your child's participation. All names will be removed from the formal study, and the students will be identified by a number only.
- The focus groups will be audio recorded with an iPad application (Awesome Voice Recorder Pro) as well as a cassette recorder for back up. The researcher will also take notes as needed. The Principal Investigator is the only individual who will have access to this information. They will be used only for transcription and general observations when discussing the information determined from the study. They will be erased/destroyed three years after the study is completed.
- The focus group interviews will be transcribed, and the information will be coded to aggregate the students' replies as not to single out any one individual.
- The transcripts and coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the cassette tapes and handwritten notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- A copy of your signed permission form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Members of the focus group will be asked not to repeat what is discussed but the researcher cannot ensure that they will respect other participants' privacy.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, you will be contacted for further consent and description of the project.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation and your child's participation are voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your or your child's current or future relations with the University of New England. Your child's decision to participate will not affect their standing as students.
- Your child may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you or your child chooses not to participate, there is no penalty to your child. You and your child are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you or your child choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty to your child.
- You will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose for your child not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this permission form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my child's participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and give my permission for my child to participate, and do so voluntarily.

Child's name

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The parent(s) or legally authorized representative named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix D

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH (NON-SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to give permission for your child to participate, document your decision.
- Your child will be provided with information about this study if you give permission for your child to participate. If your child does not wish to participate, they will not be included in the study.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want your child to participate. Your participation and your child's participation are voluntary.
- Please share this information with any other parent or legal guardian with caregiving responsibility for your child.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your child's teacher has been chosen to have social media incorporated into two of her classes. While your child was not included in the social media class, he or she has experience with social media and can provide vital information to the researcher concerning social media use. Those students that will participate in the actual study will be those that have this form signed and returned to Angela M. Wells.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who provides consent to participate.

What will I be asked to do?

- The researcher has spoken to your child's class concerning her dissertation about the role of social media in education. This consent form has been sent home to receive permission for your child to participate in the study. From the returned consent forms, the students will be assigned a number to remain anonymous within the study. Their numbers will be randomly generated to create focus groups, which will consist of six to ten students. The researcher will meet with these focus groups after school on school grounds in the presence of the teacher to discuss their experiences with social media. The students will be provided the opportunity to describe how they feel social media would affect their learning process, whether it is positive or negative. Once the focus groups have been created, the researcher will attempt to have involvement with the students two to three times (once for the focus group meetings and one to two times if the researcher needs follow-up information).
- The students will be asked to sign assent forms before the beginning of the focus group to verify they wish to continue participating. If they choose not to participate, regardless of you providing permission, they will be dismissed from the study.
- The students will be invited to review the transcripts and data coding to verify that the researcher has not misunderstood any of the students' experiences.
- Your child has received no unusual treatment or intervention before these focus groups.
- The expected duration of the individual's participation will be two weeks.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). The students will only be asked to describe their experiences with social media. The teacher's observations of the students' experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, you will be immediately notified to determine whether you wish to allow your child to continue in the study.
- The only discomfort that may result is that students will be in a focus group with other students and they may feel uncomfortable discussing their experiences in front of other individuals. Their English teacher will also be present. However, every effort will be made to make the students comfortable.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to your child for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred by you for your child to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- Your child will be provided a number to which he or she will be referred during the duration of the study. While the researcher will know your child's name, he or she will never be referred to by name in the study.
- The focus group will meet on campus grounds in a conference room that will provide privacy to the students.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your child's school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your child's name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students involved in the focus groups to be aware of your child's participation. All names will be removed from the formal study, and the students will be identified by a number only.
- The focus groups will be audio recorded with an iPad application (Awesome Voice Recorder Pro) as well as a cassette recorder for back up. The researcher will also take notes as needed. The Principal Investigator is the only individual who will have access to this information. They will be used only for transcription and general observations when discussing the information determined from the study. They will be erased/destroyed three years after the study is completed.
- The focus group interviews will be transcribed, and the information will be coded to aggregate the students' replies as not to single out any one individual.
- The transcripts and coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All of the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the cassette tapes and handwritten notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- A copy of your signed permission form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Members of the focus group will be asked not to repeat what is discussed but the researcher cannot ensure that they will respect other participants' privacy.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, you will be contacted for further consent and description of the project.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation and your child's participation are voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your or your child's current or future relations with the University of New England. Your child's decision to participate will not affect their standing as students.
- Your child may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you or your child chooses not to participate, there is no penalty to your child. You and your child are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you or your child choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty to your child.
- You will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose for your child not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this permission form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my child's participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and give my permission for my child to participate, and do so voluntarily.

Child's name

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The parent(s) or legally authorized representative named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix E

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to participate, document your decision.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- You have been chosen to have social media integrated into two of your English classes. As social media relies heavily on reading and writing skills, choosing to study English classes was more appropriate than considering a math or science class. Additionally, as the researcher is aware of your interest in incorporating social media into the classroom, you were chosen to provide the courses to study.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who provides consent to participate.

What will I be asked to do?

- You have been invited to incorporate social media into two of your high school English classrooms. You will provide instruction and assignments for the students to complete within the social media web tool. At the end of a six-week period, the researcher will come to your classrooms to provide information and consent forms to the students, both those who had social media incorporated into their classes and those who did not. The researcher will describe the reason for the study as well as the provide consent forms for their parents to sign.

- From the returned consent forms, the students will be assigned a number to remain anonymous within the study. Their numbers will be randomly generated to create focus groups, which will consist of six to ten students. You will be asked to assist the researcher in scheduling these focus groups. The researcher will meet with these focus groups after school on school grounds in your presence to discuss the students' experiences. The students who had social media incorporated into their classroom will be provided the opportunity to describe how social media affected their learning process, whether it is positive or negative. Those who did not experience the incorporation of social media will provide experiences with social media outside of the school and their thoughts on the integration of social media into their classroom.
- You will also be interviewed alone to describe your observations of the students' experiences when integrating social media in the classroom. You will also be asked to provide any differences you may have observed among the students who utilized social media and those who did not.
- You will be invited to review the transcripts and data coding to verify that the researcher has not misunderstood any information you provided to her.
- The only intervention that is experimental in this study is the addition of social media use to the English classroom.
- The expected duration of your participation will be two weeks.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). The students will only be asked to describe their experiences. The teacher's observations of the students' experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, you will be immediately notified to determine whether you wish to continue in the study.
- The only discomfort that may result is that you will be with the researcher for the focus group outside of the classroom period. You may feel uncomfortable listening to the students describe their experiences in front of other individuals.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred to you to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- You have been provided a pseudonym to which you will be referred during the duration of the study. While the researcher will know your name, any direct mention of your involvement will be with the pseudonym.

- The focus group will meet on campus grounds in a conference room that will provide privacy to the students.
- The researcher will provide a quiet and private place in which to interview you, outside of school hours.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your students' names, your name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher and the students involved in the focus groups to be aware of your participation. All names will be removed from the formal study, and you will be identified by a pseudonym.
- Your interview will be audio recorded with an iPad application (Awesome Voice Recorder Pro) as well as a cassette recorder for back up. The researcher will also take notes as needed. The Principal Investigator is the only individual who will have access to this information. They will be used only for transcription and general observations when discussing the information determined from the study. They will be erased/destroyed three years after the study is completed.
- Your interview will be transcribed, and the information will be coded to compare with the students' coding and not to single out any one individual.
- The transcripts and coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the cassette tapes and handwritten notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- A copy of your signed permission form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Members of the focus group will be asked not to repeat what is discussed but the researcher cannot ensure that they will respect other participants' privacy.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, you will be contacted for further consent and description of the project.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of New England. Your decision to participate will not affect your standing as a teacher.

- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty for you. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty to you.
- You will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this permission form.
-

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and do so voluntarily.

Participant's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The participant named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix F

Details for Teacher to Provide to Students with Assent and Consent Forms

- This teacher's English classes were chosen to study the students' perceptions and experiences with and without the use of social media in the classroom.
- The resulting project will be a doctoral dissertation.
- If you choose to participate, your parent must sign a consent form, and you must sign an assent form.
- If you return the signed forms to participate, you will receive a copy signed by the researcher. Having a signed copy of the form will assure you always have the information concerning the study, as well as acknowledge your participation in the study.
- **YOU WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS IN THE PUBLICATION.**
- The researcher will review no grades, GPAs, or other identifying information as to your academic standing. She is purely interested in your experiences and perceptions.
- If you choose to participate but then decide you do not want to, there will be no penalty if you withdraw from the study.
- There is no compensation or reward for taking part in this study.
- If you choose to participate, the researcher will interview you with other students from your teacher's classes in a focus group.
- The researcher may have one to two follow-up interviews to clarify information you provided or to further question your experiences.
- The consent/assent forms explain the full details of the study.
- If you wish to read the final dissertation, you will receive information on how to do so.
- If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the researcher. Her name is Angela Wells, and her phone number is 318-210-9887. You may also reach her by email at awells3@une.edu. This information is also in the consent/assent forms.
- If you wish to participate, please return these forms by April 28, 2017.

Appendix G

SURVEY – SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN THE CLASSROOM (SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

- Have you used social media in any other classroom as a part of your instruction? If so, in which classes have you used them?

- Do you use social media outside of the classroom? If so, which platform(s) do you use? For what reason do you use these platforms?

- What did you find easy/enjoyable about using social media in your English class?

- What did you find difficult/not enjoyable about using social media in your English class?

- Are there aspects of the application not used that you would have liked to have used? If so, what were they?

- In your experience, how do you believe your academic achievement was affected by the use of social media in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your achievement do you feel you experienced?

- In your experience, how do you believe your student engagement was affected by the use of social media in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your engagement do you feel you experienced?

- Self-efficacy is the belief that you can accomplish a task. Did the use of social media enhance your self-efficacy in any way? At the beginning of the incorporation of social media into your English class, was there something that you felt you could not do that you could accomplish by the end of it? If so, what was it? How did you gain this self-efficacy?

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- How much time outside of the classroom did you spend involved with social media completing assignments/interacting with other students or your teacher that would have otherwise been devoted to another activity?

- After using social media in your classroom, does the idea of using social media in the classroom appeal to you? If so, why? If not, why not?

- Is there anything else you would like to add concerning social media use in your English classroom, in any other classroom, or in general?

Appendix H

SURVEY – SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN THE CLASSROOM (NON-SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

- Have you used social media in any of your classes as a part of your instruction? If so, in which classes have you used them?

- Do you use social media outside of the classroom? If so, which platform(s) do you use? For what reason do you use these platforms?

- What do you find easy/enjoyable about using your preferred social media tool(s)?

- What do you find difficult/not enjoyable about using your preferred social media tool(s)?

- Are there aspects your preferred social media tool(s) that you rarely use that you would like to use more often? If so, what are they? Why do you not use them more?

- In your estimation, how do you feel your academic achievement would be affected using social media in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your achievement do you think you would experience?

- In your estimation, how do you feel your student engagement would be affected using social media in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your engagement do you think you would experience?

- Self-efficacy is the belief that you can accomplish a task. Do you feel that using social media has provided a stronger sense of self-efficacy for you in any of your academic studies? If so, what task(s) do you feel more comfortable performing due to social media? How do you feel social media is responsible for this self-efficacy?

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- How much time outside of the classroom do you spend involved with your preferred web tool(s)? Do you ever choose to spend time using social media over performing some other activity?

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- Does the idea of using social media in the classroom appeal to you? If so, why? If not, why not?

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- Is there anything else you would like to add concerning social media use in an English classroom, in any other classroom, or in general?

Appendix I

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND OPT-OUT FORM FOR SURVEY PARTICIPATION (SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to opt-out of participation, document your decision.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your teacher and English class have been chosen to have social media incorporated into their classwork. All students within the class will be exposed to the incorporation of social media; however, those who opt-out of participation will not be given the anonymous survey.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who will opt-out of participation.

What will I be asked to do?

- Social media has been incorporated into your high school English classroom. After a period of six weeks, you were provided this opt-out document. If you have chosen not to opt-out of the survey, you will receive an anonymous survey during your English class to complete and return to your teacher. If you have chosen to opt-out, you will not be required to complete the survey. You and your parent must sign this form and return it to your teacher to not participate in the survey. If you do not return this form, you will be given the survey to complete. The purpose of this survey is to learn about your experiences with social media in the classroom. The students will be provided the

opportunity to describe how social media affected their learning process, whether it is positive or negative.

- If you choose to opt-out, regardless of your parents providing permission, you will not be asked to complete the survey.
- The only intervention that is experimental in this study is the addition of social media use to the English classroom.
- The expected duration of your participation will be one class period.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). You will only be asked to describe your experiences with social media in the classroom. The teacher's observations of your experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, your parent will be immediately notified to determine whether you and your parent wish to allow you to continue in the study.
- There should be no discomfort felt on your behalf. The surveys will remain anonymous to the researcher. There will be no identifying information provided to the researcher by you or your teacher.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred to you to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- The survey you will complete will remain anonymous.
- While your teacher and the fellow students in your class will know who opted-out of the survey, the researcher will be the only individual who will review the survey results.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students in your classroom to be aware of your participation. The survey will remain anonymous.
- The survey replies will be coded to aggregate the students' responses as not to single out any one individual.

- The coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used in the reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.
- All the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the completed surveys will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- If you choose to opt-out of the survey, this form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The opt-out forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, your anonymous data may be used for further research.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of New England. Your decision to participate will not affect your standing as students.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty for you. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty you.
- Your parent will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researcher conducting this study is Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this opt-out form?

- You will be given a copy of this opt-out form.

Parent's Statement

I have read and understood the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I choose for my child to opt out of this research and completion of the survey.

Parent's signature

Date

Printed name

Child's Statement

I have read and understood the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I choose to opt out of this research and completion of the survey.

Parent's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The child named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and has opted out of the survey.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix J

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND OPT-OUT FORM FOR SURVEY PARTICIPATION (NON-SOCIAL MEDIA CLASS)

Project Title: *The Role of Social Media in a High School English Class: A Collective Case Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives*

Principal Investigator(s): *Angela M. Wells, Doctoral Candidate, University of New England, awells3@une.edu, 318-210-9887*

Faculty Advisor: *Dr. Brianna Parsons, Ed.D., University of New England, bparsons4@une.edu, 207-299-3627*

Introduction:

- Please read this form; you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to opt-out of participation, document your decision.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- This study is being performed to investigate the perspectives and experiences of high school students and teachers when social media is incorporated into their English class. This study is in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership.
- There is no consultative or financial interest to the investigator relating to the study.

Who will be in this study?

- Your teacher has been chosen to have social media incorporated into one of her classes. While your class was not included in the incorporation of social media, you have experience with social media and can provide vital information to the researcher concerning social media use. Those students that will participate in the actual study will be those who have chosen not to opt-out of the anonymous survey.
- There will be approximately 150 individuals that will be invited to participate in the study. The final number of participants will depend on who will opt-out of participation.

What will I be asked to do?

- You have been provided this opt-out document. If you have chosen not to opt-out of the survey, you will receive an anonymous survey during your English class to complete and return to your teacher. If you have chosen to opt-out, you will not be required to complete the survey. You and your parent must sign this form and return it to your teacher to not participate in the survey. If you do not return this form, you will be given the survey to complete. The purpose of this survey is to learn about your experiences with social media outside of the classroom and how you feel it would impact your educational

experience if incorporated into the classroom. The students will be provided the opportunity to describe how social media affect them, whether it is positive or negative.

- If you choose to opt-out, regardless of your parents providing permission, you will not be asked to complete the survey.
- The expected duration of your participation will be one class period.
- As this is a qualitative study, there will be no objective information provided (grades, GPA, etc.). You will only be asked to describe your experiences with social media in the classroom. The teacher's observations of your experiences will also be gathered.
- There is no reimbursement or compensation for participating in this study.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks that may result from participation in the study as no objective information will be gathered. However, if at any point, should any risk arise, your parent will be immediately notified to determine whether you and your parent wish to allow you to continue in the study.
- There should be no discomfort felt on your behalf. The surveys will remain anonymous to the researcher. There will be no identifying information provided to the researcher by you or your teacher.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others, as well as to the school board system, as this study will provide results to show how the incorporation of social media in the high school English classroom will affect the students.

What will it cost me?

- There should be no costs incurred to you to participate in this research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- The survey you will complete will remain anonymous.
- While your teacher and the fellow students in your class will know who opted-out of the survey, the researcher will be the only individual who will review the survey results.
- The study will be published as a dissertation in the researcher's pursuit of a Doctorate degree. Currently, there are no other plans to publish in any journal articles or presentations. The school board of your school may request a copy of the dissertation once completed; however, there will be no mention of your name, the teacher's name, or the school's name in the study.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed for only the principal researcher, the teacher, and the students in your classroom to be aware of your participation. The survey will remain anonymous.
- The survey replies will be coded to aggregate the students' responses as not to single out any one individual.
- The coding will be entered on a website (Saturate); however, no names will be used in the reiteration of the data. This website is password protected.

- All the electronic information will be kept on the researcher's password protected computer, while the completed surveys will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office.
- Individually identifiable information will be destroyed once the study is complete.
- The research records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies and the University of New England's Institutional Review Board.
- If you choose to opt-out of the survey, this form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least three years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The opt-out forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- There is no current intent to use the data for future research purposes; however, if the opportunity presents itself, your anonymous data may be used for further research.
- The research findings will be provided to the participants if they request them from the researcher. The researcher's email address and phone number are provided above.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of New England. Your decision to participate will not affect your standing as students.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty for you. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty you.
- Your parent will be informed of any significant findings developed during the research that may affect your willingness to participate in the research.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

- The researchers conducting this study are Angela M. Wells. For questions or more information concerning this research, you may contact her at 318-210-9887 or awells3@une.edu. You may also communicate with the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Brianna Parsons at 207-299-3627 or bparsons4@une.edu.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNE Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at 207-283-0171 or email irb@une.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this opt-out form?

- You will be given a copy of this opt-out form.

Parent's Statement

I have read and understood the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I choose for my child to opt out of this research and completion of the survey.

Parent's signature

Date

Printed name**Child's Statement**

I have read and understood the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I choose to opt out of this research and completion of the survey.

Parent's signature

Date

Printed name**Researcher's Statement**

The child named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and has opted out of the survey.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix K

Script for Student Surveys

To be said to all of the students (both social media and non-social media):

Tomorrow, we will be taking some class time to complete an anonymous paper survey regarding your educational experience this semester with technology use in the classroom. I have an Opt-Out Form for you to take home and review with your parents tonight. If you both decide that you, as the student, would like NOT to participate, please have both yourself and your parent sign and return the form tomorrow. Those not completing the survey will use the reserved class time to study for their exam.

Notes for teacher:

What you want to let the students do that turn in the opt-out form is up to you. Also, the survey has about 11 questions; please give them as much time as you can spare to take the survey.

For the survey, if anyone has questions:

- Social media in the English classroom refers to Turnitin.
- Social media outside of the classroom (at home or in other classes) would be any other social media platform: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, SnapChat, WhatsApp Chat – any way that people can get connected online.
- Academic Achievement is loosely defined as grades, GPA.
- Student Engagement is the amount of effort the students devote to class work/school in general both in the class and outside of the class. Student engagement can include extracurricular activities as well.
- Self-efficacy is the belief that one can complete a task, whether it be writing a paper or finishing an exam.

Appendix L

Interview Script for Teacher

(I will begin recording prior to sitting down with the teacher)

Good afternoon! As you know, I am Angela Wells, and I am writing my dissertation on the role of social media in the high school English class. I am studying the perspectives of your students, as well as your observations on how your students experienced its use. I have given you the consent form, which you have signed. Do you still consent to participate and be interviewed? *(I will wait for her acknowledgment, then continue.)* I want to verify that you are aware that we are recording and I will be taking notes as well. *(I will wait for her to acknowledge, then continue.)* I want to tell you how much I appreciate your assistance with this study and taking the time to work with social media in your classrooms.

I have about eleven questions to ask. Of course, I will likely expand upon your answers as we go, so there will likely be more than eleven questions you must answer. If at any time you do not want to answer a question, feel free to let me know. There will be no adverse effects if you wish not to answer a question. Are you comfortable? Do you want anything to drink before we start?

(Once she has agreed to start, I will ask the following questions, probing or expanding upon her answers as they are obtained.)

1. Have you incorporated social media into any of your other classes as a part of your instruction? If so, which classes have you used them in?
2. What is it about using social media in the classroom that interests you?
3. Do you use social media outside of the classroom? If so, which platform(s) do you use? For what reason do you use these platforms?
4. What do you feel the students found easy/enjoyable about using Turnitin.com in your classroom? What did you find easy/enjoyable about using Turnitin.com in your classroom?
5. What do you feel the students found difficult/not enjoyable about using Turnitin.com in your classroom? What did you find difficult/not enjoyable about using Turnitin.com in your classroom?
6. Are there aspects of Turnitin.com that you did not use that you wish you had could integrate into your classroom? If so, what are they?
7. In your estimation, how do you feel your students' academic achievement was affected using Turnitin.com in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your students' achievement do you think they experienced?
8. In your estimation, how do you feel your students' student engagement was affected using Turnitin.com in your English class? What benefits or detriments to your students' engagement do you think they experienced?
9. Self-efficacy is the belief that you can accomplish a task. Did the use of Turnitin.com enhance your students' self-efficacy in any way that you could determine? At the beginning of the incorporation of social media into your English class, were there

students that had difficulty with a task that was later accomplished or understood? If so, what was it? What do you think led to this self-efficacy?

10. How much time outside of the classroom did you spend involved with social media in interacting with your students? Was it easier or more difficult for you to grade assignments or have discussions with the social media classes when compared to your regular classes? Why was this?
11. Do you think you will continue to incorporate social media into your classrooms?

I want to thank you for your participation in this study. Again, if you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my advisor Dr. Parsons. Our contact information is provided on the form you signed prior to beginning this study. As I work to transcribe and code our conversations, I will contact you to ask for you to review the information to verify that I have not misunderstood any of your experiences or thought processes. Additionally, if I have any further questions or need follow-up information, I will contact you. If you wish to read the results of my study, please feel free to contact me. Otherwise, I appreciate your time and wish you well on the rest of your school year!